

**SPENSER'S USE OF EMBLEMS IN "THE FAERIE QUEENE".**

**Robert John Manning**

**Ph.D.**

**University of Edinburgh.**

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## PREFACE.

This thesis attempts to use the iconological commonplaces found in Renaissance emblem books in order to illuminate the emblematic aspects of Spenser's iconography. Since the figures in the emblem books were commonplaces repeated by author after author, there can be no certainty of finding a definitive source. But more often than not it is Spenser's sheer liveliness of invention which defeats the source-hunter. At best we might hope to find an emblematic model which formed the basis of Spenser's composition. Even analogues in the emblem books can often show the significance of Spenser's visual images. Each chapter of the thesis examines a different aspect of Spenser's symbolic art.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to Professor Alastair Fowler for his stimulating supervision and his unfailing helpfulness. The University of Edinburgh generously provided me with a grant for two years, which enabled me to continue with my research. The Queen 's University of Belfast have awarded me two research grants which have enabled me to check references and to consult my supervisor. The librarians of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh University Library, and Glasgow University Library have given me all the assistance I could have wished. Thanks, finally, to Mrs. Irene Dempster for her patience in typing this thesis.

NOTE ON EDITIONS.

I have used the following editions for quotations and page references in the thesis, since they were the most readily available to me:

A. Alciati, Emblemata Elucidata doctissimis Claudii Minois Commentariis (Lyons 1614).

P. Valeriano, Hieroglyphica (Lyons 1602).

I have checked quotations against earlier editions. In referring to Alciati's emblems I have adopted for convenience the usual numbering common in the great majority of editions printed in and after 1574. For detailed bibliography of Alciati's Emblemata, see Henry Green, Andrea Alciati and his Books of Emblems (1872). Detailed bibliographical information on other emblem books cited in the text may be found in the "Bibliography of Emblem Books" in Mario Praz, Studies in Seventeenth Century Imagery (Rome 1964).

Biblical quotations, unless otherwise stated, are from the Authorized Version. Elizabethan spelling has not been retained in Biblical quotations.

Unless otherwise stated quotations from classical authors are from the editions in the Loeb Classical Library.

Where the place of publication is omitted it may be assumed to be London.



NOTE ON SPELLING

I have regularly followed modern practice in the use of u and y, i and j, when quoting from Renaissance texts. All contractions have been silently expanded.

ABBREVIATIONS.

<u>CL</u>	Comparative Literature
<u>ELH</u>	Journal of English Literary History
<u>F.Q.</u>	<u>The Faerie Queene</u> , edited by Edwin Greenlaw, Charles Grosvenor Osgood, Frederick Morgan Padelford and others in <u>The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition</u> , Vols 1-6 (Baltimore 1932-38).
<u>JWI</u>	The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes.
<u>MLN</u>	Modern Language Notes.
<u>MLQ</u>	Modern Language Quarterly
<u>N &amp; Q</u>	Notes and Queries
<u>OED</u>	<u>The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary</u> . 2 Vols (Oxford 1971).
<u>PQ</u>	Philological Quarterly
<u>RES</u>	Review of English Studies
<u>SP</u>	Studies in Philology
<u>UTO</u>	University of Toronto Quarterly

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

1. "Semper festina tarde," from Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, p. 61.
2. "Non tibi, sed religioni," from G. Whitney, A Choice of Emblemes (Leyden 1586), p. 8.
3. "Virtus," from Philippe Galle, Prosopographia (Antwerp 159?)
4. Botticelli, Pallas and the Centaur.
5. "Potentissimus Affectus Amor," from Alciati, Emblemata (Leyden 1608), p. 111.
6. "Sol non occidat super iracundiam vestram" from Whitney, p. 216.
7. "Fidei symbolon," from Alciati (Leyden 1608), p. 14.
8. "Riconciliatione d'Amore," from Ripa, Iconologia nova (Padua 1618), p. 445.
9. Cybele's lion-drawn chariot, from Cartari, Le imagini (Venice 1592), sig. X3v.
10. "Concordia insuperabilis," from Alciati, Emblematum libellus (Venice 1546), p. 11v.
11. "Custodiendas virgines," from Alciati (Leyden 1608), p. 27.
12. "In statuam amoris," from Alciati, Emblematum liber (Augsburg 1531), sig. E7v.
13. "Virginem pudicitiae, matronum domus satagere," from Junius, Emblemata (Antwerp 1565), p. 30.
14. "Uxoriae dotes," from Junius, p. 18.
15. "Matrimonio," from Ripa (Padua 1618), p. 321.
16. "Figure de mariage," from Aneau, Imagination poétique (Lyons 1552), p. 19.
17. "Amor Aeternus," from Vaenius, Emblemata Amorum (Antwerp 1608), p. 1.
18. "Occasio," from Alciati, Emblemata (Leyden 1591), p. 147.
19. "Culpam poena premit comes," from Vaenius, Q. Horat. Flacci Emblemata (Antwerp 1607), p. 181.

20. "Nec verbo, nec facto quenquam laedendum," Alciati (Leyden 1608), Emblem 17.
21. "L'ymage d'occasion," from G. Corrozet, Hecatomgraphie (Paris 1543), sig. M2v.
22. "Fidii Simulacrum" from Valeriano, Hieroglyphica (Frankfurt 1614), p. 740.
23. "Fraude," from Ripa (Padua 1618), p. 209.
24. "Janus," from Guillaume de la Perriere, Le theatre des bons engins (Paris 1539), Emblem 1.
25. "Pando Recondita," from G. Wither, Emblems (1635), p. 138.
26. "Quid tunc," from Mannich, Sacra emblemata (Nuremburg 1625), p. 25.
27. "Patere," from Georgette de Montenay, Emblemes ou devises chrestiennes (Lyons 1571), p. 92.
28. "Astraea," from Valeriano (Frankfurt 1614), p. 748.
29. "Nemesis," from Alciati (Augsburg 1531), sig. A7.
30. "In senatum boni," from Alciati (Augsburg 1531), sig. D9v.
31. "Serva modum," from N. Crouch, Delights for the Ingenious (1681), p. 42.



SPENSER'S USE OF EMBLEMS IN "THE FAERIE QUEENE".

ABSTRACT.

This thesis attempts to use the iconographical commonplaces found in contemporary emblem books to shed some light upon Spenser's own sophisticated iconology. This is not a "source study", but an attempt to show the twists and turns of Spenser's "invention" as he strives to adapt traditional visual material to the new purposes of his poem.

The introduction outlines the development of the emblematic habit of thought in the Renaissance and discusses some of the critical and interpretative problems involved in symbolic representation. Then, each chapter considers a different aspect of Spenser's emblematic practice. Chapter One deals with two aspects of the symbolic representation of the sacred: in the first case, precise visual details embedded in the narrative directly allude to a common Renaissance emblem, the ass bearing the mysteries. The allusion directs our general interpretation of the more darkly encoded hieroglyphs in the episode. Then, in the second part of the chapter, we see Spenser arranging the symbolic attributes of a whole pantheon of antique gods and goddesses in new and unexpected combinations: this exercise in symbolic theology shadows principles which underlie social organization. Chapter Two looks at Spenser's description of statues, which enshrine emblematic details: the precise visual details reveal particular moral principles

which inform the surrounding narrative. Chapter Three looks at Spenser's personifications: here, Spenser combines a number of different emblematic figures in order to form a wholly new personification, which indicates the dependent relationship of psychological or moral states. This new figure often causes the reader to revalue commonly held assumptions about the original emblematic figure. Chapter Four shows that the devices on the knights' shields are related to particular emblematic representations of vices and virtues, rather than to heraldic traditions. Chapter Five notices how Spenser organizes his narrative around traditional emblems of the titular virtue of a particular book, and often questions the conventional moral assumptions implied in the original emblem.

I have not aimed at completeness in my coverage of the poem. Rather, I have wished to exemplify particular aspects of Spenser's emblematic inventiveness. The study of emblem books affords some insight into the subtlety of Spenser's creative processes, while enabling one to establish more surely the significance of some of the poem's key images and their relationship to Spenser's overall allegorical design.

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## INTRODUCTION

i

Spenser scholarship of the past twenty years has greatly increased our knowledge of the structural organization of The Faerie Queene, to the point where little more can be added. Relieved from the obligation to comment on larger issues, modern criticism can now profitably investigate the localized details of the poem. Of these the poem's visual images seem to have a special claim to attention.<sup>1</sup>

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1. The major studies that have advanced our knowledge of the structure of the poem as a whole are: A.C. Hamilton, The Structure of the Allegory in "The Faerie Queene" (Oxford 1961); N. Frye, "The Structure of the Imagery in The Faerie Queene," UTQ, 30 (1961), 109-127; W. Nelson, The Poetry of Edmund Spenser: A Study (New York and London 1963); A.D.S. Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time (1964); Kathleen Williams, Spenser's "Faerie Queene": The World of Glass (1966); J.E. Hankins, Source and Meaning in Spenser's Allegory: A Study of "The Faerie Queene" (Oxford 1971); J. Nohrberg, The Analogy of "The Faerie Queene" (Princeton, N.J. 1976). Harry Berger, Jr., The Allegorical Temper: Vision and Reality in Book II of Spenser's "Faerie Queene" (New Haven 1957); T.P. Roche, The Kindly Flame: A Study of the Third and Fourth Books of Spenser's "Faerie Queene" (Princeton, N.J. 1964); T.K. Dunseath, Spenser's Allegory of Justice in Book Five of "The Faerie Queene" (Princeton, N.J. 1968); Jane Aptekar, Icons of Justice: Iconography and Thematic Imagery in Book Five of "The Faerie Queene" (New York and London 1969); H. Tonkin, Spenser's Courteous Pastoral: Book Six of "The Faerie Queene" (Oxford 1972) have studied the structure of individual books of the poem. P.J. Alpers, The Poetry of "The Faerie Queene" (Princeton, N.J. 1967) focusses upon the rhetoric of the poem, as does A.C. Hamilton in his introduction to his edition of The Faerie Queene (London and New York 1977), pp. 11-18. C.S. Lewis, Spenser's Images of Life (Cambridge 1967) makes effective use of iconographic and pageant material in his analysis of the poem. Fowler, Roche, Tonkin, Nohrberg and Aptekar give an important place to emblems, iconographic conventions and visual images in their books, although Aptekar's work is seriously impaired by her scant acquaintance with iconographical work published before 1600. J.B. Bender's Spenser and Literary Pictorialism (Princeton, N.J. 1972) concentrates on the perceptual, rather than the conceptual, aspects of the poem, and is of little use to the present study.

The significant role of the visual image in Renaissance art is becoming increasingly evident: ideas which could not be committed to discursive script were, it seems, embodied in images.<sup>2</sup>

Where once Spenser's images were regarded as charming digressions, perhaps there is now a case for regarding them as philosophic mysteries.

ii

The whole host of Renaissance symbologies and emblem books sprang fully armed from the head of one work: the Hieroglyphica of Horapollo. This manuscript, discovered in 1419 and published by Aldus in 1505, pretended to give the meaning of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs, and the Renaissance regarded it as the key to ancient mysteries. Emblem writers saw themselves as part of this ancient tradition, the dispensers of sacred arcana in symbolic pictural form.<sup>3</sup>

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2. Erwin Panofsky, Studies in Iconology: Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance (Oxford 1939), Edgar Wind, Pagan Mysteries in the Renaissance (1958), and E.H. Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae: the Visual Image in Neoplatonic Thought," JWI, 11 (1948), 163-192 have greatly increased our knowledge of the significance of the visual image in the art of the Renaissance. For the embodying of mysterious and secret knowledge in images, see Wind, rev. and enl. ed. (Harmondsworth 1967), p. 17. The commonplace derives ultimately from Plutarch, De Iside et Osiride 9, in Moralia, Vol. 5, translated by F.C. Babbitt (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1936), pp. 23-25. See also Valeriano, Hieroglyphica VI, "arcana tegenda" (Lyons 1602), p. 60.
  3. There are many editions of the Hieroglyphica of Horapollo throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. On its influence, see K. Giehlow, "Die Hieroglyphenkunde der Humanismus in der Allegorie der Renaissance," Jahrbuch der



There are basically two impulses behind this hieroglyphic activity: on the one hand there is the need to veil knowledge in recondite symbols, on the other the desire to reveal knowledge through symbols. The first aims at a cryptic recording of sacred knowledge in picture script; the second employs an image from the arcana in an effort to communicate a sacred meaning.<sup>4</sup> Examples of the first tendency are found in the learned circle of Francesco Colonna,

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kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerh. Kaiserhauses, 32 (1915), 1-232; L. Volkmann, Bilder Schriften der Renaissance: Hieroglyphik und Emblematis in ihren Beziehungen und Fortwirkung (Leipzig 1923); L. Dieckmann, "Renaissance Hieroglyphics," Comparative Literature, 9 (1957), 308-321; R. Wittkower, "Hieroglyphics in the Early Renaissance," in Allegory and the Migration of Symbols (1977), pp. 113-128. For the relationship of emblems to hieroglyphs, see M. Praz, Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery (Rome 1964), pp. 23-25. Alciati, the author of the first emblem book (Emblematum liber (Augsburg 1531)), studied under Fasanini, the professor of hieroglyphics at Bologna; Pierio Valeriano, whose Hieroglyphica (first ed. Basel 1556), was the nephew of Fra Urbano Bolzanio, a member of the erudite circle, which included Francesco Colonna. Contemporary theorists of the emblem, with few exceptions (notably Bargagli (La prima parte dell'imprese (Siena 1578), Palazzi (I Discorsi sopra L'Imprese (Bologna 1570), and Fraunce, (Insignium, Armorum, Emblematum, Hieroglyphicorum, et Symbolorum . . . explicatio (1588), sigs. Pl-P2), proudly trace the pedigree of the art back to the ancient Egyptians: see, for example, C. Minois, Syntagma de Symbolis, in Alciati, Emblemata (Lyons 1614), pp. 2-4; G. Belloni, Discorso intorno all'antro delle ninfe naiade di Homero (Padua 1601), pp. 14-15; C.F. Menestrier, L'Art des emblemes (Lyons 1662), p. 4.

4. For the distinction between learned and popular iconography, see Wind, p. 71n.68. He contrasts the work of Valeriano, Giralaldi (De diis gentium varia et multiplex historia (Basel 1548)), and Bocchi (Symbolicae quaestiones (Bologna 1555)), which was originally conceived for a recondite circle, with Ripa's Iconologia (first ed. Rome 1593) and Cartari's Imagini dei Dei degli Antichi (first ed. Venice 1556), which were manuals for popular use. Both the latter works were issued in many subsequent editions.

whose wittily erudite work the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili occasionally employs "hieroglyphs" to encode rather simple and trivial statements.<sup>5</sup> These are steganographic hieroglyphs,<sup>6</sup> designed to cover a straightforward statement with dark mysteriousness. This portentousness was ridiculed by Jonson, himself no mean practitioner of the hieroglyphic art, in the description of the device for the gullible Abel Druggier:

He first shall have a bell, that's Abel;  
And by it, standing one, whose name is Dee,  
In a rugg gowne; there's D, and Rug, that's Drug:  
And, right anenst him, a Dog snarling Er;  
There's Druggier, Abel Druggier. That's his signe,  
And nere's now mysterie, and hieroglyphick! 7

Fortunately, hieroglyphs usually offer more legitimate modes of discourse. The second impulse is more common. An image from the natural world, or from pagan mythology, or from Christian tradition is used to communicate a religious mystery or moral state. Within this practice lies an obvious contradiction: even though the symbol points to a mystery, the symbol is drawn from a more or less public language of symbolism. To this tradition belong the authors of the popular iconographical

5. Symbols are used as "an additive picture-script, whose parts were to be read like words and sentences of a discursive language" (Wind, p. 208n 58). See illustration 1, where the symbol of the circle is added to the familiar anchor entwined with a dolphin, to produce the phrase "semper festina tarde" (from Hypnerotomachia Poliphili 1499, edited by G. Pozzi and A. Ciapponi, 2 vols (Padua 1964), p. 61). Erwin Panofsky, The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer (Princeton, N.J. 1971), p. 177 discusses another famous example of this kind: Dürer's Mysterium der ägyptischen Buchstaben. Each image corresponds to a phrase in Pirckheimer's and Stabius's text.
6. See Wind, p. 107.
7. Ben Jonson, The Alchemist, Act 2, scene 6, ll 19-24, in The Works of Ben Jonson, edited by C.H. Herford, Percy and Evelyn Simpson, Vol. 5 (Oxford 1954).

handbooks, Ripa and Cartari.<sup>8</sup>

The obscurantist and elitist claim that hieroglyphs were designed to communicate knowledge to the learned while concealing it from the profane seems scarcely credible. If the Renaissance magus wanted to keep these mysteries secret the last thing one would expect him to do would be to publish them with detailed explicatory commentaries. For all the mystagogues' praises of Harpocrates and Angerona, the silent guardians of the mysteries, their tomes are unusually garrulous.<sup>9</sup>

But if it was not the fear of betraying his mysteries to the vulgar that prevented the Renaissance symbologist from committing his ideas to discursive script, there was another reason for his stated distrust of the verbal medium. The visual image was a complex statement, rendering meanings which could be verbalized only with the greatest difficulty. The hieroglyph portrayed significance succinctly and directly, knitting up many meanings into itself with an immediacy which verbal explication could only break down into component parts, thereby reducing the completeness and complexity of the vision.<sup>10</sup> The profusion of meanings tended not towards profuseness but

8. See above n. 4.

9. On this apparent contradiction, See Wind, pp. 11-12. On Harpocrates and Angerona, see the references collected by Wind, p. 12n. 40.

10. There are two views of how the visual symbols were intended to communicate their meaning: on the one hand the "intuitive theory" (championed by Gombrich, "Icones Symbolicae," p. 171) rests upon Plotinus's theory that the symbol presents all parts of a discourse implicitly and immediately in a single sign: "not by a multiplicity of thoughts about an object," but through the presentation of knowledge directly through



towards precision of meaning. The difficulty of the material the author strove to convey necessitated his adoption of this intellectually teasing and allusive mode of hieroglyphic discourse.

iii

We are increasingly coming to agree with Lewis's assertion that "Spenser is only superficially a narrative poet."<sup>11</sup> Again and again throughout the poem the narrative pauses to focus on the details of an image, described in awed tones of wonder and amazement. Spenser's naive narrator is offering, in Panofsky's terms, a "pre-iconographical description,"<sup>12</sup> designed to get the image right, to lead us to contemplate in turn the significant aspects of his composite image. It is only after we see what the image is, that we can understand what it says.

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an image (see Ficino, In Plotinum V. viii (Opera (Basel 1576), p. 1768); on the other hand Wind argues persuasively that the intuitive grasp of meaning depends upon discursive knowledge: "Unless one knows what a hieroglyph means, one cannot see what it says" (Wind, p. 208). For the whole argument, see Wind, pp. 207-208. For Wind, then, it seems that iconography, whether popular or recondite, has to be learned, and, therefore, learned. I have not thought it necessary to resolve this problem in respect of Spenser's iconography. Although his images consistently inspire confidence that he had a thorough knowledge of basic iconographical material, we do not know whether he intended the images to work implicitly upon the apprehensions of his readers, or whether he expected his audience to have the knowledge to appreciate the secret wit of his images, and the finesse of their composition. Perhaps, it does not matter: there is room for both types of reader.

11. C.S. Lewis, The Allegory of Love (Oxford 1936), p. 97.

12. E. Panofsky, Studies in Iconology (New York, Evanston, San Francisco, London 1972), p. 9.



However, Spenser's images, whether he intended it or not, have kept their meanings fairly well concealed. Part of the fault is our own: we are only just relearning the language of Renaissance symbolism; part of the fault (if it can be called that) is Spenser's: his iconography is highly sophisticated and, at its best, original. The iconographical commonplaces found in contemporary emblem books provide a useful route by which we can explicate Spenser's visual images. Occasionally we find that he combines two or more emblematic figures to form a new personification indicating the dependent relationship of different moral or psychological states; at other times he applies a well-known emblem to a new situation in order to explore conventional problems; elsewhere he alludes directly to particular emblems to indicate the enduring moral and cosmic patterns which underlie social behaviour. There is nothing mechanical about his procedure: he combines these commonplaces with a range and freshness (occasionally tinged with cunning deviousness) of invention, which is always logical, yet always surprises. Unfortunately we do not know how Spenser invented his figures: whether from a careful adjustment of traditional source material to a new iconological programme, or more intuitively, through a careful meditation upon traditional images and the requirements of his poem. Whatever the method, behind it all is a keen human awareness and desire to illuminate the predicaments of humanity.

Of course, there can be no question of source study here. So commonplace were the images that they were repeated from emblem book to emblem book in a fashion which we would call shameless plagiarism. But this borrowing merely confirms

that these images were the common intellectual property of scholars and men of letters for two centuries. To establish direct borrowing in such a field would be a more than Herculean labour. But even if the task were possible, it would be undesirable. Too many studies of emblems have degenerated into exercises in bibliography, with scholars pursuing fugitive emblems from edition to edition, from author to author, with no other end in view than the chase itself.<sup>13</sup> The poem they started from has been, more often than not, buried in lists of repeated commonplaces. There is an elementary pleasure in the recognition of an emblem in a poem. But all too often the pleasure of recognition grows out of all proportion, multiplying itself into lists of emblems. Before long the recognition assumes the dignity of a "source," and takes its place in a catalogue. Any human interest in the poem gets left behind and any reason the poet may have had for using the image is ignored.

I have not aimed at completeness in my coverage of the poem, though I have tried to be as comprehensive as possible in my treatment of each emblem I have selected for discussion. Each section illustrates a different kind of critical problem, and a different aspect of iconological analysis. With other poets there may have been a danger of killing the poem by over-

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13. Henry Green's pioneering study, Shakespeare and the Emblem Writers (1870) is marred by this fault. After reading it, one is left with the impression that Shakespeare was indebted to emblem books rather than the classics, the bible, or even his own commonsense, for even the most commonplace notions! His error contaminates a number of theses on Spenser: Ellen G. Ward, "Spenser and the Emblem Writers," unpublished M.A. thesis (Duke University 1936), Sister Mary Beutner, "Spenser

explication. But Spenser's images are not relatives of the "Sphinx who dies as soon as her riddles are answered." As Edgar Wind remarked of Alberti's winged eye: "a great symbol is the reverse of a sphinx; it is more alive when its riddle is answered." <sup>14</sup>

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and the Emblem Writers," unpublished diss. (St. Louis University 1941), J.W. Jessee, "Spenser and the Emblem Books," unpublished diss. (University of Kentucky 1955). Invaluable though it is, Praz's Studies in Seventeenth-Century Imagery is more interesting as bibliography than as interpretation.

14. Wind, p. 235.



## CHAPTER ONE:

Emblems of Sacred and Secular Mysteries

A mistaken conception of the Egyptian hieroglyph led Renaissance symbologists to attempt to embody their notions of the divine in images. They believed that the Egyptians entrusted their sacred mysteries to picture writing in order to communicate their most valued knowledge to the learned, while concealing it from the ignorant. Encouraged by the possibilities of a sacred picture script, some Renaissance writers yielded to the seductive charms of obscurantism, more intent on concealing their knowledge from the ignorant, than imparting it to the wise.<sup>1</sup> The Neoplatonists to some extent rescued this endeavour from misguided ingenuity. To them the image of the divine became a means of knowing the divine, for they hoped to lead the neophyte from the image to the reality which transcended it. However, the visual image was only a partial revelation; full knowledge

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1. "All those who are wise in divine matters . . . prefer incongruous symbols for holy things, so that divine things may not be easily accessible" (Dionysius the Areopagite, De coelesti hierarchia 11, 5, cited by Wind, pp. 12-13). Minois gives the usual arguments succinctly: "Observamus itaque a sapientibus Aegyptiis Symbola primum fuisse usurpata illa, quae hieroglyphika nuncupabant; quibus suam raram illam quidem et reconditam sapientiam solis iis agnitam esse volebant, qui ea se dignos praestarent. Ab ea enim consulto et prudenter hisce ingeniosis et eruditis Symbolis, uti iam admonui, profanum vulgus arcebat: eoque modo arcana illa doctrinae revera primae et arduae, castis beneque rotundis auribus et praeparatis animis excipi volebant" (Syntagma de symbolis, pp. 2-3). Valeriano cites divine precedent for hieroglyphic activity in his preface to the Hieroglyphica. Quoting Psalm 78.2, ("I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old"), Valeriano exclaims, "What else did He want to say than that His language be hieroglyphic and He voice the ancient records allegorically" ("quid aliud sibi voluit, quam hieroglyphice sermonem faciam, et allegorice vetusta rerum proferam monumenta," sig. 3). For translation of Minois, see p. 10A.



p.10 n.1:

Translation of Minois:

We see, therefore, that those symbols which were called hieroglyphs were first used by the wise Egyptians; for they wished that this exclusive and hidden wisdom should be understood only by those who showed themselves worthy of it. But carefully and prudently they concealed it from the common crowd under these learned and complex symbols, as I have advised: and in this way they wanted these sacred mysteries of primal and difficult doctrine to be heard only by pure and receptive ears and prepared minds.

required that the image be discarded for the reality it implied.

At strategic points in The Faerie Queene Spenser employs particular hieroglyphs to impart secular and sacred truths. This chapter deals with two instances of this practice. In the Una and the Satyrs episode Spenser uses the familiar ASINUS PORTANS MYSTERIA emblem to discuss the limitations of man's apprehension of sacred knowledge; in describing Cambina's elaborate hieroglyphic chariot Spenser attempts a complicated exercise in symbolic theology in order to outline the enduring social and cosmic patterns which underlie the ritual of courtship. In both episodes Spenser decorously uses the hieroglyphic mode for this discussion, since the material he deals with is of the nature of a sacred or secular mystery.

### I. The Ass Bearing the Mysteries

#### Una and the Satyrs: THE FAERIE QUEENE 1. 6.

"This episode," confide Kellogg and Steele darkly, "requires a great deal more scholarly research."<sup>3</sup> Critics, seeking to enlighten the innocent reader through the medium of historical allegory, have led him into a burgeoning forest of interpretations, where he is unable to see the wood for the large number of carefully identified trees. The hapless satyrs have been variously allegorized as particular communities

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2. On the use of images for the apprehension of the divine, see Wind, pp. 219-222.

3. Robert Kellogg and Oliver Steele, eds. Books One and Two of "The Faerie Queene," the Mutability Cantos and Selections from the Minor Poetry (New York 1965), p. 28.

who might conceivably be said to have given refuge to Truth at various stages of human history: the primitive church, ignorant Christians, the ancient cultures of Egypt, Greece and Rome, the early Protestant sects, the Waldensian and Albigensian movements, the Welsh, and, in the most recent, and arguably the most unlikely suggestion so far, the Jews.<sup>4</sup> None of these identifications helps our general understanding of the episode very much. When we turn to those critics who see the episode as theological allegory, the satyrs, Una and her ass are provided with neat labels indicating precise theological positions. Even J.M. Steadman's invaluable learned discussion is marred by this fault: he wishes to interpret the figures almost steganographically, reading each symbol as meaning one precise thing: for him Una is the word of God, the ass is the ministry.<sup>5</sup> Although Spenser describes Truth as unveiled in

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4. See the opinions of Upton and Percival, cited in The Works of Edmund Spenser: A Variorum Edition, edited by Edwin Greenlaw et al., - hereafter cited as Spenser Variorum - Volume 1 (Baltimore 1932), 240; Kellogg and Steele, p. 29; F. Kermode, "The Faerie Queene, I and V," in Shakespeare, Spenser, Donne: Renaissance Essays (1971), p. 48; Hankins, p. 215; R.D. Jordan, "Una among the Satyrs: The Faerie Queene 1.6," MLQ, 38 (1977), 123-131.
  5. For example, the satyrs are variously taken as "innocent superstition" (Pauline Parker, The Allegory of the "Faerie Queene" (Oxford 1960), pp. 45-6), "creatures purely under the natural law" (G. Hough, A Preface to "The Faerie Queene" (1962), p. 150), "virtuous pagans . . . following the light of nature" (Virgil K. Whitaker, "The Theological Structure of the Faerie Queene, Book I," in That Soueraine Light: Essays in Honor of Edmund Spenser, 1552-1952, edited by William Mueller and Don Cameron Allen (Baltimore 1952), p. 52). J.M. Steadman, "Una and the Clergy: the Ass Symbol in The Faerie Queene," JWL, 21 (1958), 134-137, interprets the ass as the ministry, Una as the True Church, and "the divine truth expressed in Scripture."

this episode, I do not think he wished to lay her quite so bare as this.

Spenser's allegory here is more universal in its application. To translate the events into abstract theological allegory is to remove the human dimension from the poem; while to claim that the episode discusses various historical communities whose knowledge of Truth was limited is but to provide precise instances of the general dilemma which Spenser's allegory illustrates. Mystery and its revelation are particular concerns of the whole of the first book of The Faerie Queene.<sup>6</sup> Truth, in the person of Una, is presented for much of the book as veiled and mysterious. Indeed, in the book's early cantos characters have great difficulty in distinguishing Truth from its counterfeit images. But in Canto Six Truth is revealed directly to the "salvage nation." This episode examines the effects of revelation and shows the limitations of man's apprehension of the divine. Obstacles to spiritual illumination are not only erected by evil characters, but are apparently inherent in our natures.

ii

The pathos of the satyrs' position is summed up in a precise, though curious tableau:

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6. See A.D.S. Fowler, "Emanations of Glory: Neoplatonic order in Spenser's Faerie Queene," in A Theatre for Spenserians, edited by Judith M. Kennedy and James A. Reither (Manchester 1973), p. 59.



During which time her gentle wit she plyes,  
 To teach them truth, which worshipt her in vaine,  
 And made her th'Image of Idolatryes;  
 But when their bootlesse zeale she did restraine  
 From her own worship, they her Asse would worship fayn.

(F.Q. 1.6.19) <sup>7</sup>

The satyrs' instinctive response to true doctrine is reverence. So strong is this impulse that when denied one likely object of devotion, they instantly adopt a more ridiculous one. Instead of the Truth, they worship the teacher, and when this is forbidden, they revere the vehicle which carries her.

The satyrs' capricious transfer of their devotion from Una to her ass alludes to a popular Renaissance hieroglyph, the ASINUS PORTANS MYSTERIA, which depicts an ass carrying the shrine of Isis on its back. As it passes people bow down to the image. The ass grows proud, thinking that the people worship him, until a blow from his driver reminds him that far from being the god, he merely carries the god on his back. <sup>8</sup> Like the ass in the emblem the satyrs have mistaken the right object of worship;

7. Citations from The Faerie Queene in my text are to The Works of Edmund Spenser, edited by Edwin Greenlaw et al., Vols 1-6 (Baltimore 1932-38). I have regularly followed modern practice in the use of u and v, i and j.
8. See illustration 2. Whitney's emblem is a translation of Alciati's "NON TIBI, SED RELIGIONI," Emblematum liber (Augsburg 1531), sig. B7. In editions printed after 1574, the emblem is usually numbered 7. In subsequent references to the Emblemata I follow this usual numbering. Steadman, who first noticed the parallel, notes the wide use of the emblem, by Babrius "De asino gestante simulacrum" in Gabriele Graeci fabellae XXXXIIII (Lyons 1551), and by Faernus, Fabulae Centum (Rome 1563), No. 95. Sometimes one finds the emblem produced separately: see, for example, the engraving of Alciati's emblem by Maarten van Heemskerck in Otto Benesch, Die Zeichnungen der niederlandischen Schulen des XV und XVI Jahrhunderts (Vienna 1928), No. 100.

but unlike the ass they do not act out of misplaced pride. Rather, their worship of the ass is a sincere, though over-enthusiastic extension of their devotion to Una. But if the worship of Una's ass reflects the satyrs' worship of Una herself, so the absurdity of their worship of the ass emphasises their initial error in worshipping Una.

The ass emblem concerned the teaching of the mysteries, and its purpose was to remind the clergy of their unworthiness for their task of teaching the mysteries of faith. Any glory they received was properly due not to them but to the God they bore witness of.<sup>9</sup> In discouraging the satyrs' adoration, Una shows exemplary humility. But the satyrs' reverence goes beyond what is properly due to the minister of the gospel, and gives to Una what is properly God's. They literally idolize her.

Evidently the veiled condition of Truth for much of the first book of The Faerie Queene is inevitable. Even when Truth is unveiled, characters seek to cover her with a veil of their own making. Those privileged to glimpse Truth's unveiled radiance interpose an image between the Truth and their own finite minds. The satyrs' error lies in their limited understanding of the divine. Incapable of realizing that Truth transcends the image that reveals it, they direct their devotions to the image rather than the Truth it represents. The ass is

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9. Minois in his commentary on Alciati interprets emblem 7 as a warning to the clergy to remember that they are servants of God; any glory they receive is due not to them but to God: see Alciati, Emblemata (Lyons 1614), pp. 48-49. Erasmus ironically relates the proverb Asinus portans mysteria, to anyone engaged in a task beyond his merit and abilities: "As if some person unable to read were placed in charge of a library" (Adagiorum Chiliades quatuor (Paris 1572), II, ii, 4, pp. 359-360). Whitney's translation applies Alciati's emblem directly to the clergy.

necessary for their comprehension of the divine: either in the form of Una, the ASINUS PORTANS MYSTERIA, who teaches them her doctrine of Truth, or in the shape of the ass itself. Finally it makes little difference to them.

iii

Limitations upon spiritual illumination vary according to individual capacities. During the canto a number of characters confront the vision of revealed Truth with lesser or greater degrees of comprehension.

Sansloy is at the bottom of the scale, his vision clouded by his sensual appetite. He achieves a literal revelation by forcefully tearing aside the veil that conceals Una's beauty. Incapable of seeing this beauty as a reflection of divine invisibilia, he regards it as a kind of aphrodisiac stimulant, which causes him to redouble his efforts to rape the unfortunate lady. His own depraved nature prevents him from seeing this revelation as anything more than an encouragement to lust, and so he sensually debases this vision of Truth.

Una fares better at the hands of the satyrs, who deliver her from her would-be ravisher. Both Sansloy and the satyrs are basically lustful, a fact which led the Eighteenth Century critic Joseph Spence to complain of the impropriety of Spenser's fiction: "He introduces," cavilled Spence, "a company of satyrs to save a lady from rape, tho' their distinguishing character was lust."<sup>10</sup> However, Spenser chose the satyrs as

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10. Spenser Variorum, 1. 363.



Una's rescuers precisely because "their distinguishing character was lust," <sup>11</sup> thus enforcing a parallel between Sansloy and the Satyrs. But although the pagan and the "salvage nation" start from a similar basic concupiscence, their reactions to the sight of the unveiled Una are markedly different. Whereas the pagan's sophistication sought to work the vision of Truth "to his will" with "fawning words" (F.Q. 1.6. 3-4), when the satyrs "fawn" on Una "with count'nance faine" (F.Q. 1.6.12), they show naive wonder at Una's beauty. Where Una's beauty encouraged Sansloy to a more outrageous exhibition of his beastly lust, the satyrs are led from their native lustfulness to an innocent, almost child-like delight and devotion. Indeed, Una's plight and her beauty prompt the satyrs to such pity and amazement, that they suffer something of a conversion, laying aside their "rusticke horror" (F.Q. 1.6.11). The sight of the distressed Una leads them to realize the potentiality for kindness and sympathy, which resides within their rude natures. However, there is an embarrassed awkwardness on both sides when they subject themselves to Una:

The doubtfull Damzell dare not yet commit  
Her single person to their barbarous truth,  
But still twixt feare and hope amazzd does sit,  
Late learnd what harme to hastie trust ensu'th:  
They in compassion for her tender youth,  
And wonder of her beautie soveraine,  
Are wonne with pittie and unwonted ruth,  
And all prostrate upon the lowly plaine,  
Do kisse her feete, and fawne on her with  
count'nance faine.

(F.Q. 1. 6. 12)

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11. For the satyrs' traditional association with LUXURIA, see Alciati, Emblem 72.



The tableau scrupulously observes the fact that the satyrs are physically incapable of kneeling before Una, but must prostrate themselves because of their "backward bent knees." Una is forced to recognize their well-meaning natures by their sheer physical awkwardness. After all, they do their best given their limitations. This tableau recalls Philip Galle's emblem VIRTUS, which depicts a satyr lying prostrate before an armed female figure, who holds a sword in one hand and a spear in the other. One foot presses down the defeated satyr, the other rests firmly upon the ground: "Now I trample evil and the Satyrs' vices under foot," exclaims VIRTUS in the emblem.<sup>12</sup> But whereas VIRTUS conquers the satyrs by force of arms, Una elicits the satyrs' veneration through what amounts to her weakness: her beauty arouses reverence and her distress arouses compassion. In other words, revealed Truth triumphs not in her own strength but by an appeal to natural sentiments and sympathies.

The satyrs' display of willing subjection is mutedly apocalyptic.

Their harts she ghesseth by their humble guise,  
And yielde her to extremitie of time;  
So from the ground she fearelesse doth arise,  
And walketh forth without suspect of crime.

(F.Q. 1.6.13)

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12. Philippe Galle, Prosopographia (Antwerp 159?), 2 (see illustration 3). The engraving also appeared in Sweertius, Deorum Dearumque Capita ex Antiquis Numismatibus Abraham Orteli (Antwerp 1573). The illustration recalls Chastity's victory over Lust in the mediaeval psychomachia: Adolf Katzenellenbogen, Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval Art, translated by Alan J.P. Crick (New York 1964), p. 13n.1 describes an image of Castitas trampling upon a daemon.

At first it seems that the golden age foreseen by prophet and humanist, where Truth blossoms unhindered by malice, is dawning. 13 Nevertheless Una's situation is far from ideal. What flourishes here is not a promised universal reform based on the recovery of Truth, but the satyrs' "barbarous truth," a rough honesty founded upon an elementary natural sympathy. Here Una's Truth is adulterated to "trust." The large apocalyptic vision has been scaled down to the satyrs' limited capacities. Finally, revealed truth is subsumed into the imagery of their sylvan rituals, and they crown Una their May Queen. This act foreshadows her coronation at the end of the book, when she

Did seeme such, as she was, a goodly maiden Queene.  
(F.Q. 1.12.8)

The satyrs are not far away from the Truth, but they are incapable of distinguishing what she seems, from what she is.

Triumphantly the satyrs bring Una to Sylvanus, who has a more advanced perception of Una's beauty. At first the aged woodgod's response is unashamedly erotic, but the vision

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13. "from the ground she . . . doth arise" literally translates the Psalmist's "Veritas de terra orta est" (Psalm 85.12). This motto was adopted by the Protestant printer John Knoblouch of Strassburg, to allude to the reform of Christian faith at the Reformation. Truth's situation in Knoblouch's imprint corresponds to Una's: she is depicted as a harassed woman, naked in the wilderness, waiting to be rescued. (see Fritz Saxl, "Veritas Filia Temporis," in Philosophy and History: Essays Presented to Ernst Cassirer (Oxford 1936), pp. 202-203). "yields her to extremitie of time" alludes to the humanist emblem "Veritas Filia Temporis," which was applied to a number of political changes throughout the sixteenth (and seventeenth) centuries (see Saxl, pp. 197-222; and D.J. Gordon, "Veritas Filia Temporis: Hadrianus Junius and Geoffrey Whitney," JWI 3 (1939-40), 228-240). Aretino's device, "Veritas Filia Temporis," depicts a satyr lying prostrate before Truth (see Saxl, pp. 199-202).

leads him beyond lust to amazed contemplation:

The God himself vewing that mirrhour rare,  
Stood long amazd, and burnt in his intent.

(F.Q. 1.6.15)

Una's beauty is ambiguously described as a mirror, which not only reflects Sylvanus, but also "God himself." Unlike Sansloy, Sylvanus is moved to divine contemplation, rather than lust. He ascends the Neoplatonic scala from the physical image to glimpse the divine original. But what he sees is confused, the mirror of Una's beauty finally reflecting an enigmatic image:

Sometimes Dame Venus selfe he seemes to see,  
But Venus never had so sober mood;  
Sometimes Diana he her takes to bee,  
But misseth bow, and shaftes, and buskins to her knee.

(F.Q. 1.6.16)

Venus and Diana are but partial manifestations of the larger, transcendent Truth which Una represents. If anything she includes both Venus and Diana, harmonizing the apparently mutually exclusive opposites, Voluptas and Castitas.<sup>14</sup> But neither the image of Venus, nor the image of Diana are really appropriate. They are symptoms of Sylvanus's restricted comprehension of the divine, which distract him from the real Truth that Una represents. Like the satyrs he imposes an image of his own devising upon the unveiled Truth, which causes more problems than it solves. His image of Una is only part of the truth.

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14. Such a harmony is illustrated by Bocchi in Symbolicae quaestiones (Bologna 1574), pp. 24-25. Under the motto Cum virtute Alma consentit vera voluptas, he depicts Minerva and Venus embracing each other as they crown a drunken Silenus. Lewis's view that the episode "shows good as fun," (Spenser's Images of Life, p. 84), is strongly supported by Bocchi's emblem.



The satyrs' predicament is analogous to that of the centaur in Botticelli's painting, Pallas and the Centaur. The centaur painfully turns his face towards Pallas, as the goddess takes him by the hair. His fretful expression suggests the struggle taking place within him as he becomes subject to her higher power. The centaur is armed with a quiver and bow, symbols of the sensual urges, while Pallas is adorned with olive branches, the symbols of wisdom. The composition as a whole can be seen as a representation of animal urges being led toward divine wisdom.<sup>15</sup>

Una, "with olive girlond cround" (F.O. 1.6.13), is, like Pallas, the representative of divine wisdom;<sup>16</sup> the satyrs, like the centaur, are drawn towards her, spurred on and yet impeded by their concupiscent natures. The difference between centaurs and satyrs ought not to deter us: Ben Jonson conveniently identifies the two species on, what was for him, sound classical authority:

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15. See illustration 4. For detailed discussions of this painting, see Rudolf Wittkower, "Transformations of Minerva in Renaissance Imagery," JWI, 2 (1938-39), 200, and E.H. Gombrich, "Botticelli's Mythologies: A Study of the Neo-Platonic Symbolism of his Circle," in Symbolic Images: Studies in the Art of the Renaissance (1972), pp. 69-72.

16. For the olive's association with wisdom, see Ripa, Iconologia (Rome 1603), p. 442, "Sapienza," and Ripa, Nova iconologia (Padua 1618), p. 4, "Accademia."



Among the ancients, the kind both of the centaurs and satyrs is confounded and common with either. As sometimes the satyrs are said to come of the centaurs, and again the centaurs of them. Either of them are of double form, but after a diverse manner. And Galen observes out of In Hippocratis Epidemiarum III that both the Athenians and Ionians called the satyrs feras or feréas, which name the centaurs have with Homer, from whence it were no unlikely conjecture to think our word fairies to come. 17

This is not the place to follow up Jonson's tantalizing suggestion to consider the nature of Spenser's fairies. But the limitations of the satyrs' vision of the divine may well be shared by the fairy characters in Spenser's poem. In any case Spenser here considers a basic human dilemma which results from a confrontation with Truth. Like the centaur and the satyrs man is torn between his lower instincts and his impulse towards the divine, a conflict (represented by Botticelli) between the bestial side of the centaur's nature and the goddess, and by Spenser as the satyrs' choice between Una and the ass, between wisdom and brutish instincts.<sup>18</sup> Instead of being lead from the image of Truth to contemplate divine Truth itself, the satyrs, like their knees, are "backward bent," and descend to worship the physical embodiment of Truth at the expense of Truth itself. Their physical needs, or rather their need of a physical object to worship, finally get the better of their elementary impulse

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17. Ben Jonson, Oberon: The Fairy Prince, l. 48n., in Ben Jonson: The Complete Masques, edited by Stephen Orgel (New Haven and London 1969), p. 549.

18. The ass was commonly associated with Priapus because of the size of its phallus: "per la simiglianza, ch'era fra loro del granmembro," Cartari, Imagini de i Dei de gli Antichi (Venice 1647), p. 231. See also Giraldi, De Deis Gentium (Lyons 1565), p. 462.

towards the divine. In the end the satyrs slip back easily and joyfully into their natural world. Spenser's humour at their expense is tolerantly indulgent, aware that in man's perplexed and limited vision of the divine it is easier to contemplate God in Nature <sup>19</sup> than to struggle for a purer vision. However, it is perhaps significant that the final vision of the poem is only achieved, when "Natur's selfe did vanish." (F.Q. 7.7.59). Although Spenser uses the hieroglyphic mode to embody religious truths he is wryly aware of its limitations.

## II. Cambina and the Hieroglyphs of Concord.

### THE FAERIE QUEENE 4.3.

#### i

Cambina enters the lists to resolve the judicial combat between Cambel and Triamond rather overburdened with symbolic apparatus. In one hand she holds a staff entwined with two serpents, in the other a cup filled with Nepenthe, yet she still manages to drive a chariot drawn by two fierce lions. <sup>20</sup> Each of her attributes is perfectly familiar in itself. The staff entwined with serpents is Mercury's caduceus; both Cupid and Cybele, the Magna Mater, drive lion-drawn chariots; while Nepenthe, we remember, is the care-assuaging drug Helen

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19. For the satyrs' worship of Sylvanus as the worship of Nature, see Nohrnberg, pp. 219-222. For Sylvanus as hulē, see Nohrnberg, pp. 219-220n. 296.

20. F.Q. 4.3.38-44.

administered to the guests at Menelaus's banquet in Homer's Odyssey.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, it is small wonder that the spectators at the tournament regard Cambina with "rude confusion." Since she bears the attributes of so many gods and goddesses, it is difficult to know quite who she is. And if we are truthful, we must confess ourselves puzzled, or at least surprized, by this aggregation of symbolic detail. Clearly Cambina's manual dexterity in juggling all these attributes demands an equal exegetical dexterity on the part of the reader, who, despite his familiarity with each symbol, has to make sense of their unusual agglomeration.

But if Cambina's associations with Cybele, the foundress of the Eleusian mysteries, and with Mercury, the patron of hermetic philosophy, have not already alerted us to the presence of an infolded mystery, then this unlikely and almost comic profusion of symbolic detail should. It was a commonplace among the Orphic theologians of the Renaissance that the supernatural was composite, since the divine One infolded the Many. On this basis the Renaissance engendered an obscure class of mythological beings known appropriately as the dei ambigui,

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21. But Helen now on new device did stand,  
 Infusing strait a medicine to their wine,  
 That (drowning Cares and Angers) did decline  
 All thought of ill. Who drunke her cup could shed  
 All that day not a tear - no not if dead  
 That day his father or his mother were,  
 Not if his brother, child or chiefest deare  
 He should see murderd then before his face.  
 Homer, Odyssey, 4.293-300, tr. George Chapman in  
Chapman's Homer, ed. Allardyce Nicoll, Vol. 2  
 (London 1957).



whose monstrous forms were the result of the combination of the identifying attributes of a number of distinct and disparate classical deities.<sup>22</sup> Cambina clearly belongs to this mysterious species, and her profusion of attributes is the result of a symbolic complicatio of the attributes of Mercury, Cybele, Cupid and Helen. But we may well ask, what does this exercise in symbolic theology mean?

Our responses are further complicated by the comment and explication which each of Cambina's attributes has attracted. Classical and Renaissance symbologists never tired of explaining the infolded mysteries of the caduceus.<sup>23</sup> while nearly all interpreters of Homer have taken considerable care in commenting upon the care-assuaging properties of Nepenthe.<sup>24</sup>

The Cambina episode has been blamed for its dullness.<sup>25</sup> But it is only dull if we cover her symbolic complexities with

22. Wind, pp. 75ff., 91ff., 196, 199ff., 203ff., and 211ff. offers a full and learned discussion of these hybrid deities.

23. See the collection of symbolic explanations gathered by Guy de Tervarent, Attributs et Symboles dans l'art profane 1450-1600 (Geneva 1958), pp. 57-58, s.v. Caducée. Valeriano discusses the various meanings of the caduceus s.v. Terra, Concordia, Pax, Felicitas, Eloquentia (see Hieroglyphica, lib. 15, pp. 156-157).

24. For the most thorough treatment of the properties of Nepenthe, see Pietro Lasena, De Homeri Nepenthe (1624) in Jacobus Gronovius, Thesaurum Graecarum Antiquitatum, vol. 11 (Leyden 1701). He carefully interprets the drug allegorically, as Eloquence and Consolation, then anagogically, as Virtue, Philosophy, Prudence, and Equanimity.

25. "an abstract rendering of truths which are more vital elsewhere" (Williams, 124).



a single blanket definition, regarding her attributes as mere illustrations of an abstract notion. Certainly, Cambina does represent Concord, but she embodies a specific kind, or perhaps we ought to say a number of different kinds, of Concord.<sup>26</sup>

Each symbol repeats the basic theme of enmity of savagery converted to love. The lions, who once ruled the wood, have forgotten their former cruelty and draw Cambina's chariot in meek submission to her commands. The two serpents "entrayled mutually in lovely lore" around the "rod of peace" (F.O. 4.3.12) were, according to the story of the invention of the caduceus, locked in fierce conflict before Mercury made peace between them by interposing his staff.<sup>27</sup> To emphasize their reconciliation an olive garland, the emblem of peace, crowns the serpents' heads. Nepenthe's classical ability to "drown cares and angers" Spenser attributes to its capacity for driving out the humours which provoke wrath and contention. Perhaps the drug's miraculous power pacifies the serpents and tames the lions. Or perhaps the caduceus, which Spenser claims can effectively dismay fiends can also dismay savage lions. But in any case each attribute bears the promise that Cambina will resolve the

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26. The enlarged editions of Ripa distinguish no less than seven different kinds of Concord. Part of the trouble with twentieth century iconographical analysis is its tendency to conflate distinctions which the Renaissance saw as important. To say that "the episode is simply an allegory of concord" (Roche, p. 28) is to erode the categories which Spenser seeks to distinguish.

27. See Giraldi, p. 257: *Natalis Comes, Mythologiae* (Geneva 1612), lib 5, cap. 5, pp. 436-437; and Minois' commentary on Alciati, Emblem 118, pp. 426-427.

conflict between Cambel and Triamond, turning their enmity to peace and friendship.

However each attribute does not merely repeat the meaning of the others, for this hard symbolic shell contains more than one significant kernel. The attributes cooperate one with the other to form layer upon layer of significance.

## ii

This significant cooperation between Cambina's attributes may be referred to several emblematic matrices. Cambina with her cup and caduceus resembles a traditional emblematic description of CONCORDIA, who carries in one hand the cup of Bacchus and in the other the cornucopia of Ceres, representing the prosperity and fruitfulness which flow from peace and concord.<sup>28</sup> The lion-drawn chariot bears some likeness to the chariot driven by Cupid in Alciati's emblem POTENTISSIMUS AFFECTUS AMOR.<sup>29</sup> Here Love is depicted furiously driving a

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28. "Deam autem Concordiam praeterea effigunt, dextra craterem tenentem, et laeva nunc Cornucopiae, nunc sceptrum" (Giraldi, p. 34). See also Nicolas Reusner, Emblemata (Frankfurt 1581), No. 19 PULCHRITUDO CIVITATIS, CONCORDIA: "Craterem fert dextra manus, cornuque sinistra / Pomis, et odoro flore plenum, Copiae." The cornucopia and the caduceus were interchangeable attributes of FELICITAS PUBLICA: See Tervarent, s.v. Corne d'abondance III, "Dès l'antiquité, la corne d'abondance est avec le caducée l'attribut de "FELICITAS PUBLICA" sur des médailles d'empereurs romains."

29. Alciati, Emblem 105 (see illustration 5). This emblem appeared in the first edition of Alciati (Augsburg 1531), sig. A4v., and it derives from the Greek Anthology, Book 9. 221 (in The Greek Anthology, tr. W.R. Paton, Vol. 3 (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1926), p. 115). It was translated by Whitney, p. 61.

the poem we now know as)

chariot drawn by two lions. With one hand he brandishes a whip over their heads, and with the other he tightly holds the reins, as though it requires all his strength to master and control his savage team. The emblem thus represents Cupid's power, which can bring even the most savage beasts under his yoke. "Is someone capable of overcoming such wild beasts likely to show mercy to us?" asks Alciati fearfully.

Into Love's lion-drawn chariot Spenser places Cambina with the attributes of a specifically civic CONCORDIA. Instead of Love's whip she carries the caduceus, instead of the reins she holds the Nepenthe-filled cup. The lions no longer smart under Cupid's threatening whip, nor feel the tyrant's hand upon the reins, but draw the chariot in willing obedience. Cambina apparently guides her chariot with the magical aid of her cup and staff. In contrast to the statuesque CONCORDIA of the emblem books, Cambina actually uses her attributes to exert her authority. So it would probably be more accurate to see Cambina not as a representation of a finally achieved Concord, but as a mediator through whom Concord is constantly in the process of being achieved. And the implication behind the placing of a figure associated with Concord into Love's chariot is that Love's potent forces can be harnessed to achieve civic Concord.

Just as Cambina guides her chariot with her cup and caduceus, so she uses these instruments to bring the two warriors under Love's yoke. She smites them with the caduceus, and immediately they drop their "wrathful blades" and their "mighty spirits" are "Bound with mightier band" (F.Q. 4.3.48). A draught



of Nepenthe converts their hatred to love, and they are persuaded, even as the lions were, to "forget their former cruell mood." The golden cup from which they take their "harty draught" and their resulting clasped hands and kisses concur in both learned and popular iconography to declare the warriors' new found friendship.<sup>30</sup>

Although we might conveniently leave our reading at this emblematic portrayal of the titular virtue of the Book of friendship,<sup>31</sup> we see only half the symbolic picture if we forget that Cambina joins the warriors' hands and ministers the cup of friendship to them. She performs Love's traditional function of mediation and reconciliation, creating from warring factions alliances of peace and friendship.<sup>32</sup>

30. For joined hands as a symbol of friendship, see Sambucus, Emblemata (Antwerp 1584), p. 13, VERA AMICITIA: of Concord, see Alciati, Emblem 39, Horapollo, Hieroglyphica, edited by F. Sbordone (Naples 1940), II, 11, and Whitney, p. 76. For joined hands as a symbol of Christ-inspired social union, see Georgette de Montenay, Emblemes ou Devises Chestiennes (Lyons 1571), No. 32 NON QUAERAS DISSOLUTIONEM. Two warriors embracing having thrown away their swords represent "union fraternelle" in Montenay, No. 70 SOL NE OCCIDAT SUPER IRAM VESTRAM. (see illustration 6). The golden cup (F.Q. 4.3.48) is, of course, the loving cup; it is also an emblem of Friendship for Picinelli, the Crater Philotesius (Mundus Symbolicus (Cologne 1695), Lib. XIV, cap. 11, s.v. Amicus 12.) See Roche, pp. 28-29, for the parallels in Alciati and Sambucus.
31. Roche's analysis concludes with the tableau of the warriors shaking hands: "Spenser is simply adding another emblem of his basic theme" (Roche, p. 28).
32. Love's mediating role is seen in the famous Triad of Fidius, where Love ("castus amor") joins the hands of Honour and Truth: see Alciati, Emblem 9, FIDEI SYMBOLON (see illustration 7). Ripa's depiction of RICONCILIATIONE D'AMORE (Padua 1618) shows a girl holding a cup as she joins the hands of two putti (see illustration 8).



Till Cambina's intervention Love in its various aspects, storge, philia and eros, has been a socially disruptive force: family allegiances have been set against erotic inclinations, and both have threatened to overcome friendly alliances.<sup>33</sup> Canacee's much vaunted chastity is based upon a regressive preference for family ("naturall affection") and a fear of "Cupids greater flame" (F.Q. 4.9.2). Her refusal to love, for that is all her chastity is, leads to social discord, "unquiet strife" and "great quarrels" (F.Q. 4.2.37). Triamond's love for Canacee (the "raging fire of love to woman kind" (F.Q. 4.9.1) leads him to compete with his brother for her hand and to the fracturing of their fraternal bond of Concord. Cambel's defence of his sister's chastity, based on a strong sense of family loyalty ("deare affection unto kindred sweet" (F.Q. 4.9.1),<sup>34</sup> results in the wasteful, destructive tournament.

But where Canacee's chastity had set factions at war one with another, Cambina promotes a chaste affection which succeeds in harmonizing these erotic and socially destructive conflicts. Between Cambel and Triamond, where before there had been an almost sexual rivalry, she fosters friendship; in promoting the marriage between Triamond and Canacee she fulfils

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33. Lewis, Allegory of Love, p. 339 argues that the legend of friendship is concerned with the reconciliation of different kinds of love, "lovers deare debate" (F.Q. 4 Proem 1). See Spenser's classification of Eros, Storge, and Philia in F.Q. 4.9. 1-2. Fowler, p. 28 argues persuasively that the episode "symbolizes the satisfactory resolution of the claims of family loyalty and of love."
34. For the shadow of incest that hangs over Cambalo and Canacee in Chaucer's Squire's Tale, see Nohnberg, p. 623.

Triamond's sexual desire, and enlarges Cambel's sense of family loyalty to include the suitor, Triamond, within the exclusive family circle; in making Cambel Triamond's brother-in-law she compensates Triamond for the loss of his fraternal companions;<sup>35</sup> her own marriage to Cambel duplicates, and so strengthens, the bonds of family, love and friendship between Cambel and Triamond. Finally, her befriending of Canacee mirrors the friendship she established earlier between the two warriors. Cambina uses the very emotions which had previously set these characters at enmity, erotic passion, family loyalty, and friendly alliance, to bind each individual into a more stable, inclusive society.<sup>36</sup>

Cambina's lion-drawn chariot is not therefore the familiar emblematic chariot of irresistible erotic passion, but of a harmonizing love, which accommodates passionate allegiances within a larger social concord. Under her influence these passionate allegiances, which, if uncontrolled, threaten discord, are reined into and bind together a new social grouping, which fulfils individual emotional needs, while maintaining social peace.

### iii

Cambina's influence, then, is a civilizing one, leading man from primitive chaotic emotions into viable social groupings. Where our first emblematic matrix related her

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35. Cf. the "union fraternelle" of the reconciled warriors in Montenay, Emblem 70; see n. 30 above.

36. Cf. Ripa's RICONCILIATIONE D'AMORE (see n. 32 above). Cambina, like the girl with the cup, reconciles different kinds of love.

attributes to her successful reconciliation of individual emotional needs with the demands of social concord, our second matrix concentrates more upon her adept practice of those political arts necessary for the creation and maintenance of civilized life.

Cybele, the Magna Mater, goddess of civilization, drives a lion-drawn chariot, not unlike Cambina's. Cybele's harnessed lions were a testimony of her ability to bring any part of the earth, however wild and savage, under rule and cultivation.<sup>37</sup> This mythological analogue establishes Cambina, and, indeed, the other lion-taming females in The Faerie Queene, as agents in the process of civilizing the earth. But where Una's divine beauty converted savagery into obedience, and where Mercilla's authoritative iron chain forcibly restrained rebellious might,<sup>38</sup> Cambina's mastery is maintained by apparently

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37. For Cybele's lion-drawn chariot, see Boccaccio, Genealogie Deorum Gentilium, edited by V. Romano (Bari 1951), 3.2; Cartari, p. 112; and Valeriano, p. 113. Ovid, Fasti 4. 215-218 explains the reason why the lions draw her chariot: "feritas mollita per illam creditur; id curru testificata suo est" (Ovid, Fasti, tr. Sir James George Frazer (London and Cambridge Mass. 1931)). Augustine reports Varro's opinion that the lion indicates that "no kind of land is so remote, or so utterly wild, as to be incapable of being brought under cultivation" (Concerning the City of God, tr. Henry Bettenson, ed. David Knowles (Harmondsworth 1972), VII. 24, p. 283)). For Cambina's lion-drawn chariot as an attribute of Cybele, see Fowler, pp. 185-186n and Roche, pp. 24-26. See illustration 9. Reusner emphasizes the potentially civilizing power of love, by adopting the illustration of Alciati's POTENTISSIMUS AFFECTUS AMOR for his own emblem, ARS VICTRIX NATURAE (Emblemata, 15).

38. Cf. F.Q. 1.3.5-8 and 5.9.33.



more tenuous, though none the less effective, means: through the mysterious powers of her cup and her caduceus.

Her potent caduceus infolds the emblems of both Mercury and Pallas, for her snake-entwined rod is crowned with Athena's olive-garland. This combination of attributes alludes to the composite deity, the Hermathena. Bocchi's representation of this deity shows the two gods, Mercury and Pallas, standing at the angle of a wall, their arms linked. Between them, upon a bridled lion's head, stands a putto, who holds in one hand the controlling reins, while pointing with the other to the sources of his dominance, the two gods. The motto to the emblem is SIC MONSTRA DOMANTUR, "in this way monsters are tamed". Apparently the lesson to be drawn is that in order to overcome brute force and savagery it is necessary to combine the powers of eloquence with prudence or active sagacity. The emblem confidently expresses the belief that political skills of oratory assisted by wisdom will successfully civilize the most savage instincts. <sup>39</sup>

Cambina's mastery over her team illustrates her successful application of her olive-crowned caduceus, of those arts of eloquence and prudence. <sup>40</sup> When seeking to assuage the

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39. Bocchi, p. 216. SAPIENTIAM MODESTIA, PROGRESSIO ELOQUENTIAM, FELICITATEM HAEC PERFECIT. On the Hermathena, see D.J. Gordon, "Rubens and the Whitehall Ceiling," in The Renaissance Imagination (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London 1975), pp. 47-49, and Cartari, p. 188.

40. On the caduceus as a symbol of eloquence, see Valeriano, p. 157, Minois on Alciati, Emblem 118, p. 425. For Cambina's caduceus as eloquence, see Fowler, p. 159.

wrath of the combatants in the tournament she exercises her powers of oratory in the cause of peace:

Amongst her teares inmixing prayers meeke,  
And with her prayers reasons to restraine,  
From blouddy strife, and blessed peace to seeke,  
By all that unto them was deare, did them beseeke.

(F.Q. 4.3.47)

She causes the lions to "forget their former cruell mood," and "t'obey their riders hest, as seemed good" (F.Q. 4.3.39).<sup>41</sup>

The linking of her team is a civilizing act, which establishes a bond of obedience both between the lions and between the lions and their rider, a social bond in the interest of the larger social good.

The putto in Bocchi's emblem reminds us of the use Cambina makes of love in establishing peace between warring factions. But where previously we regarded this love as a means of reconciling individual passions with the interests of social peace, in the present context Cambina's use of love can be seen as a prudent political act. Cambina uses love to hold society together, harmonizing personal and family interests with larger political alliances.

Cambina's cup of Nepenthe reinforces this interpretation. Allegorically interpreted the fabled liquor represented nothing less than the power of eloquence to overcome grief.<sup>42</sup>

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41. Pliny reports on the powers of speech to pacify lions: "I have heard it reported for a truth, by a captive woman . . . that she had pacified the violent fury of many Lions in the woods and forests, by faire language and gentle speech . . . Many and divers opinions are currant . . . touching this matter; namely, that savage beasts are dulced and appeased by good words and faire speech" Plinius Secundus, The Historie of the World, translated by Philemon Holland (1635), p. 201.

42. Lasena, p. 1375, quoting Plutarch: "nimirum suavem Helenes

tr/with

But her cup is also a sacramental cup, sealing the alliance between man and woman, brother and brother-in-law, sister and sister-in-law. In short it is a marriage cup, indicating Cambina's use of the marriage sacrament to uphold civilized life, to heal strife, and to create social and political unity through love.

Finally Cambina's political supremacy pays a neat compliment to Elizabeth, who could see herself reflected here in yet another of the "mirrours more then one"<sup>43</sup> that Spenser holds up to his sovereign in the course of the poem. The olive branch and caduceus (the "rod of peace") relate Cambina to the representations of the goddess Pax on antique coins commemorating the Pax Augusta. But not only does the reference point to a revival of the Pax Augusta, the state of peace established by the emperor, under the wise rulership of the queen, it also points to the Pax Augusti,<sup>44</sup> the pacific virtue of the ruler herself.

## iv

Behind the harmonious constitution of the new bond of

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eloquentiam, et pulchram pulcherrimae foeminae orationem efficacissimum verumque Nepenthes fuisse." For translation, see p. 35A.

43. F.Q. 3 Proem. 5.

44. On the coin with the motto Paci Augustae and the caduceus, see Valeriano, pp. 156-157, s.v. Pax. See also Fowler, p. 159n.2, and Wittkower, "Transformations of Minerva," 194n.6.



p. 34 n.2:

Translations of Lasena:

Doubtless Helen's sweet speech and the fair words of the most beautiful woman was the most potent Nepenthe.

love and friendship between Cambina, Cambel, Triamond and Canacee lies the death of two of Triamond's brothers. The exquisite bond of Concord which existed between the three brothers, so complete that it was "as if but one soule in them all did dwell" (F.O. 4.3.43), was fractured in the tournament with Cambel. Almost as if to console Triamond for the loss of his brothers (one of the traditional allegorical interpretations of Nepenthe was, in fact, the power of consolation to overcome grief), <sup>45</sup> Cambina establishes this new bond of Friendship to replace the old bond of brotherly Concord. So satisfactory is the replacement, or so effective is the draught of Nepenthe, <sup>46</sup> that the brothers die unlamented and the new friendship is cemented without an apparent thought for the deceased brethren. But this apparently tit-for-tat consolatory restitution of the bond of Concord may more properly be seen as a progression from one relationship to another, in a Neoplatonic scheme by which the imperfections of the initial triad are removed, and the bond perfected. Over this mysterious transition Cambina officiates as a psychopompos, who guides the souls of the friends into harmonious union by the aid of her Mercurial staff and cup. In this thaumaturgic role the full power of these attributes is exercised: Cambina controls not only social forces,

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45. Lasena, pp. 1378-1379.

46. Cf. Chapman's translation of *Odyssey* 4. 296-300: "Who drunke her cup could shed / All that day not a tear - no, . . . Not if his brother . . . / He should see murtherd then before his face."

but the powers of life and death.

Cambina's lion-drawn chariot, is, as we have seen, related to Cybele's chariot of civilization; it is also related to the lion-drawn cosmic chariot of Lucretius's Mother Goddess, which portrays the nature of the world and the forces which compose it. This ultimate allegorical matrix penetrates to the very source and origin of things, infolding the mysteries of life and death, the balanced warfare between creation and destruction, which controls the universe.<sup>47</sup> Macrobius, attempting to reconcile all myths and all mythologies in terms of one single solar myth, regarded the progress of the Mother of the Gods in her lion-drawn chariot as a celebration of the Earth's annual victory over death, when the sun crosses the vernal equinox bringing life and renewal after the rigours of winter.<sup>48</sup>

It has been convincingly demonstrated that the basic elemental dance that holds the universe together is an analogue to the inter-locking love-relationships that unite the four lovers and friends in this episode.<sup>49</sup> In schematic representations of the four elements the lion-drawn chariot was adopted as the attribute of the Earth.<sup>50</sup> Cambina's lion-drawn chariot,

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47. Cf. Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, translated by W.H.D. Rouse, 3rd edition (London and Cambridge, Mass. 1937), II, 589-657.

48. Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, translated by Percival Vaughan Davies (New York and London 1969), I. 21. 6-10, p. 142.

49. Fowler, pp. 28-29. For Cambina's corybantic car and its relation to Nature, see Nohrnberg, pp. 649-651.

50. Ripa (1603), pp. 58-59, s.v. *Carro della Terra*. Cf. F.Q. 7.7.26; Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, I.10. 20, p. 73.



represents not only the earth in this elemental scheme of relationships, but she is also the Earth as Lucretius sees her, the Mother of the gods, containing within herself the source of all the elements, holding the promise of renewal and revivification.

Ficino and his fellow Neoplatonists understood life as a cycle, which returns to the source from whence it flowed. This cycle proceeded in a tripartite progression, synonyms for which Ficino never tired of repeating: "creat - rapit - perficit", "incipit - transit - desinit", "effluit - refluit - profluit". The creative outflowing from the divine was thought to provoke a vivifying rapture, causing the creature to return to the original divine perfection. <sup>51</sup>

The erotic narrative of the conception and birth of the triplets, Priamond, Diamond and Triamond, transparently veils just such a triadic progression. The nymph, Agape, sits combing her locks by "a Cristall flood" (F.Q. 4.2.45), an effective icon of the involuntary outpouring or emanatio of divine beauty into the material world. <sup>52</sup> The second stage of the progression,

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51. Ficino, De Amore, II, 1-2, p. 1323. See Wind, pp. 37-38 for discussion of this cycle.

52. For the neoplatonic image of the material world as water, see Pico della Mirandola, Heptaplus, translated by Douglas Carmichael (New York 1965), p. 75, "Second Proem": "This world is symbolized by water, a flowing and unstable substance." Mannich, Sacra Emblemata (Nuremberg 1625), p. 23 uses the image of water flowing from its source to illustrate the mysteries of the trinity and the incarnation in the emblem EMANAT OMNIA AB UNO.

raptio, is imaged as a literal rape: a knight catching sight of her beauty falls upon her and rapes her. As a result, the nymph conceives and gives birth to the "three lovely babes" (F.O. 4.2.45). The mutual love of the three brethren manifests and restates the quality of agape, imaging in their "brotherly love,"<sup>53</sup> the divine beauty which the nymph expressed in her own person. In Neoplatonic terms the love of the three brothers represents a return (or remeatio) to the original beauty and love of the mother, Agape. Or, in other terms, the triad of caritas unfolds the unity of Agape.<sup>54</sup>

This mutual love between the three brothers is a spiritual equivalent to the image of the three-bodied Geryon that Alciati uses in his emblem INSUPERABILIS CONCORDIA.<sup>55</sup>

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53. The Greek agape is translated as "brotherly love" in the Authorized Version, the Geneva bible and the Bishops' bible at the following places: Romans 12. 10; 1 Thessalonians 4.9; Hebrews 13.1. H. Stephanus, Thesaurus Graecae Linguae ([Geneva] 1572) s.v. Ἀγάπη, translates the word as "Dilectio, Charitas." In all probability the Renaissance did not have such a high estimation of this quality as we in the twentieth century have come to attain after the work of Anders Nygren, Eros and Agape, translated by Philip S. Watson (New York and Evanston 1969).

54. For the logic of unity unfolding in trinities, see Wind, pp. 36-43. It is based on one of the Conclusiones of Pico della Mirandola: "He that understands profoundly and clearly how the unity of Venus is unfolded in the trinity of the Graces, and the unity of Necessity in the Trinity of the Fates, and the unity of Saturn in the trinity of Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto, knows the proper way of proceeding in Orphic theology" (cited by Wind, p. 36).

55. Alciati, Emblem 40. The emblem first appeared in the Emblematum libellus (Venice 1546), p. 11y (see illustration 10). Roche, pp. 17-18 has some discussion of the connection between this emblem and Spenser's three brothers.

But while the union of Geryon is grotesquely physical, the union of the "lovely babes" is based upon the "unity of the Spirit" that Paul characterizes as the mark of Christian agape.<sup>56</sup>

They exist

As if but one soule in them all did dwell,  
Which did her powre into three parts divide.

(F.Q. 4.2.43).<sup>57</sup>

But the simile that describes the completeness of the brothers' union, also exposes their weakness. Instead of the invincibility that characterizes the grotesque physical union of Alciati's Geryon, the spiritual love that unites these brothers so firmly rests upon a particular fragile bond of mortality: "as if but one soule in them all did dwell." Born into the material world, this bond of love is prey to death. The three brothers live in the ominous shadow of the three sisters, the Fates. The Triad of Love is mirrored in the Triad of Necessity.<sup>58</sup> The brothers, like Agape herself, must be amazed by the stern decree of the Fates.

If Agape presides over the begetting of the initial triad of brotherly, though mortal, love, Cambina, her daughter, armed with her thaumaturgic instruments offers the promise of a victory over the baleful Fates, creating a new relationship

56. Ephesians 4.3

57. For the interpretation of the three-fold lives of the sons of Agape as man's multiplicity of souls, see Fowler, p. 28n. 1.

58. For an example of the Fates being reflected in the Graces, see Wind, p. 249n. 27.



able to withstand the rigours of death. If Agape is the mother, then Cambina in her lion-drawn chariot is the Magna Mater, promising life and renewal. As Agape presided over the birth of the "lovely babes," so Cambina, equipped with her caduceus, the symbol of birth,<sup>59</sup> presides over the rebirth of one of these brothers into a new relationship. If Agape on her infernal journey is amazed by the fates, Cambina holds Mercury's wand that can confound "the hellish fiends" (F.O. 4.3.42). Her cup of Nepenthe similarly connects her with rebirth, recalling as it does the bowl of Bacchus from which souls drink as they pass from the heavens into the world of generation.<sup>60</sup>

The love between the sons of Agape existed within the shadow of death; Cambina, the reconciling love that unites Cambel and Triamond, bears in her hand the symbols of birth. Having established the firm bond of male friendship, Cambina leads such friendship away from being an exclusively male, and finally sterile, non-productive union, by introducing a sexual, generative and creative relationship between male and female, between Triamond and Canacee, and between Cambel and herself. Whereas the bond between the three brothers was prey to death and sexual rivalry, the newly created relationship through the addition of the bonds of matrimony, abolishes sexual rivalry and allays death through procreative union. The triad of Agape is perfected in the quaternion of chaste, matrimonial love.

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59. For the caduceus as a symbol of birth, see Macrobius, Saturnalia, I. 19. 16-17; Valeriano, pp. 155-156, s.v. Genesis; and Fowler, p. 161.

60. See Macrobius, Commentary on the Dream of Scipio, translated by W.H. Stahl (New York and London 1952) I. 12, 8, p. 135.

## CHAPTER TWO

AGALMATA:The Emblematic Statues of Cupid and Venus.

Only slowly has criticism come to accept the fact that Spenser's eye was not trained by "the great art of the Continent." The tonal parallels between the poetry and the painting of Rubens and Raphael, Titian and Botticelli that delighted nineteenth century critics have been justifiably exposed as fanciful enthusiasm. Nevertheless, some still harbour the dream that they might yet "put [their] fingers upon some of the sources in the plastic arts in England of Spenser's own actual imagery."<sup>1</sup> One would, however, be reluctant to encourage any such hope. Not only are these artefacts notoriously elusive, but this desire denigrates Spenser's fertile

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1. See Jefferson B. Fletcher, "The Painter of the Poets," cited in *Spenser Variorum* 3. 399. Some examples of the kind of criticism that rejoices in analogies between Spenser's poetry and continental art are as follows: Legouis is a late exemplar (1924): "Picture Spenser as a born painter who never held a brush in his hand. . . . Had he been born in Italy he might have been another Titian, a second Veronese. In Flanders, he would have anticipated Rubens or Rembrandt" (cited *Spenser Variorum* 3. 392); "The superhuman beauty of this angel should be Raphael's, yet the picture as a whole demands Titian" (Leigh Hunt, *Imagination and Fancy* (1844) cited in *Spenser Variorum* 2. 271); "To visualize Belphebe . . . we should look at Botticelli's Venus" (Fletcher, cited in *Spenser Variorum* 2. 217). Rudolf Gottfried, "The Pictorial Element in Spenser's Poetry," *E.L.H.*, 19 (1952), 203-213, dealt a body-blow to this kind of criticism, exposing its fanciful nature quite ruthlessly.

inventiveness, by seeking to tie him down to the mere copying of actual visual "sources."

The similarities between Spenser's imagery and the great art of Renaissance Europe which enchanted so many early critics derives not, as they suspected, from Spenser's familiarity with actual canvasses, but more probably, if at all, from the common written sources which Spenser shared with Continental artists. The descriptions of classical statuary in Pliny, Plutarch, Pausanias, and the Greek Anthology stimulated more than one great humanist artist on the Continent, while also providing material for the humanist authors of emblem books.<sup>2</sup> Alciati borrows several of his emblems from descriptions of ancient statues;<sup>3</sup> Ripa traces not only a number of his personifications but the nature of his art itself back to its sources in antique sculpture.<sup>4</sup> Minois felt it was the duty of the emblemist to expound the mysteries of the agalмата of antiquity.<sup>5</sup>

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2. The antiquarian inspiration of various continental artists is dealt with by Fritz Saxl in "Jacopo Bellini and Mantegna as Antiquarians," "Titian and Pietro Aretino," and "A Humanist Dreamland," reprinted in A Heritage of Images (Harmondsworth 1970), pp. 57-104. On descriptions of classical statuary as the basis of emblems, see Praz, pp. 25-27; William S. Heckscher and Karl-August Wirth, "Emblem, Emblembook," in Reallexicon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte, Vol. 5 (Stuttgart 1959), cols. 122-3.
  3. See, for example, Emblem 22, CUSTODIENDAS VIRGINES (based on Phidias); Emblem 25, IN STATUAM BACCHI (Praxiteles); Emblem 113, IN STATUAM AMORIS; Emblem 121, IN OCCASIONEM (Lysippus); Emblem 162, GRATIAE; Emblem 91, OCNI EFFIGIES; EMBLEM 196, IN PUDORIS STATUAM.
  4. "Le Imagini fatte per significare una diversa cosa da quella, che si vede con l'occhio, non hanno altra più certa, ne più universale regoli, che l'imitatione delle memorie, che si trovano . . . ne' Marmi intagliate per industria de' Latini e Greci," Ripa, "A Lettori." For translation, see p. 43A.
  5. Minois, De Emblematis, pp. 14-15.



p. 43 n.4:

Translation of Ripa:

Images made to mean something other than what is perceived by the eye,  
have no more certain and universal rules than the imitation of the  
monuments, which the Romans and Greeks carved with such ingenuity.

Scipione Ammirato warmly praised the mysterious images of the ancient gods, claiming that their monstrous details concealed many profound secrets.<sup>6</sup> For this reason Menestrier classed those emblems derived from ancient statues as hieroglyphic emblems.<sup>7</sup>

The availability of this material put Spenser, working in the cultural backwater that was sixteenth century Ireland, in touch with the antiquarian interests that stimulated High Renaissance art. In this, as in many other things, The Faerie Queene has much in common with Colonna's archaeological romance, the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili: in both works the authors confront their principal characters with potent symbolic images from the cultural past.

Spenser derives two related statues in The Faerie Queene (the image of Cupid and the statue of Venus) from descriptions of ancient statuary. Whether he obtained this knowledge directly from classical sources, or from the emblem books, or from the Renaissance mythographers need not concern us over much. In both instances the allusion to a classical model is clear, and in both cases the emblematic model is subtly transmogrified. Full explication of each image requires not only reference to the classical model, but also to Spenser's other exercise in the statuesque mode.

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6. Scipione Ammirato, Il roto overo dell' imprese (Naples 1562), p. 15.

7. Menestrier, p. 32.

# I. THE STATUE OF CUPID

And at the upper end of that faire rowme,  
 There was an Altar built of pretious stone,  
 Of passing valew, and of great renowme,  
 On which there stood an Image all alone,  
 Of massy gold, which with his owne light shone;  
 And wings it had with sundry colours dight,  
 More sundry colours, then the proud Pavone  
 Beares in his boasted fan, or Iris bright,  
 When her discolourd bow she spreads through heaven bright.

Blindfold he was, and in his cruell fist  
 A mortall bow and arrowes keene did hold,  
 With which he shot at randon, when him list,  
 Some headed with sad lead, some with pure gold;  
 (Ah man beware, how thou those darts behold)  
 A wounded dragon under him did ly,  
 Whose hideour tayle his left foot did enfold,  
 And with a shaft was shot through either eye,  
 That no man forth might draw, ne no man remedye.

And underneath his feet was written thus,  
Unto the Victor of the Gods this bee:  
 And all the people in that ample hous  
 Did to that image bow their humble knee,  
 And oft committed fowle Idolatree.

(F.Q. 3.11.47-49)

i

All students of Spenser are greatly indebted to Professors T.P. Roche and Alastair Fowler for their equally sensitive and intelligent interpretations of the House of Busyrane episode in The Faerie Queene. With considerable tact and sophistication Roche and Fowler, each in his different fashion, interpret the events in the enchanter's house as a psychological allegory, which objectifies Amoret's sexual fears, as her erstwhile lover is transformed upon marriage



into a masterful husband, who aggressively demands his rights of physical possession.<sup>8</sup>

The main lines of their interpretation are not at all in dispute. However, within their readings of the poem, there is still room for the explication of particular details of the episode. Of these details, the statue of Cupid has some claim upon our attention. While not exactly overlooked in recent discussions of the poem, the statue still has more to tell us.

The statue derives its significant details from an emblematic model. Here the emblem fulfils its traditional role as a kind of moral painting. While the ritualistic fluidity of the masque portrays the psychological dimension of the drama being enacted within the house, the static monumentality of the statue is chosen to portray the enduring moral issues at stake in the experience.

ii

The most unusual feature of the statue of Cupid is the wounded dragon which lies beneath the god's feet:

A wounded Dragon under him did ly,  
Whose hideous tayle his left foot did enfold,  
And with a shaft was shot through either eye,  
That no man forth might draw, ne no man remedye.  
(.F.Q. 3.11.48).

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8. See T.P. Roche, pp. 72-88, and A.D.S. Fowler, Triumphal Forms (Cambridge 1970), pp. 47-58.

C.S. Lewis has with almost complete certainty established the emblematic provenance of this dragon.<sup>9</sup> In Alciati's emblem, CUSTODIENDAS VIRGINES, a dragon attends the goddess Minerva, the patroness of chastity. The dragon's traditional function, Alciati tells us, is to guard things, a task for which the beast is particularly fitted because of its unusually sharp sight. Such vigilance, Alciati advises, is absolutely necessary for the protection of unmarried girls, since Cupid sets his snares everywhere.<sup>10</sup>

The associations behind the emblem are of some antiquity. The image derives from an effigy of Minerva sculpted by Phidias and described by Pausanias and Plutarch.<sup>11</sup> The emblemist, Hadrianus Junius, adopted the material for one of his emblems in imitation of Alciati.<sup>12</sup> Apparently the famous sculptor placed a snake beneath the goddess's feet to indicate the care needed to safeguard the chastity of unmarried women.

9. C.S. Lewis, Spenser's Images of Life, pp. 22-24. Jean MacIntyre, "Spenser's The Faerie Queene III.xi. 47-48," Explicator, 26 (1966), Item 69 also notices the allusion to Alciati, interpreting the statue as an emblem of imprudence. Nohrnberg, p. 486 relates the emblem to Britomart's watchfulness in the House of Busyrane.

10. See Alciati, Emblem 22. The emblem first appeared in Emblematum liber (Augsburg 1531), sig. C2.

11. Pausanias, Description of Greece, Volume 1, translated by W.H.S. Jones, (London and New York 1918), Attica, XXIV, 7; Plutarch, Isis and Osiris, 381 E-F.

12. Hadrianus Junius, Emblemata (Antwerp 1565), Emblem 24, p. 30.

But in Spenser's description it seems that something has gone badly wrong. The dragon attends not Minerva, but Cupid; and, what is more, Cupid has cruelly disqualified the dragon from performing its traditional office as guardian by shooting out both its eyes. The obvious deduction is that the beast has fallen foul of one of Cupid's many snares. Further, Cupid seems to be asserting his right to act as the keeper of women, in place of the chaste dragon. Yet his qualifications for this role are highly dubious, since, if not actually blind, he is at any rate blindfolded, and so cannot see. The dragon that was admirably qualified as a guardian, and who could at least have remedied Cupid's deficiency, has been wilfully rendered incapable.

iii

The travesty of the CUSTODIENDAS VIRGINES emblem alerts us to a major thematic preoccupation not only of this episode, but of the whole of Book Three of The Faerie Queene: the difficulty of winning and keeping a woman. In the book's early cantos most of the female characters prove to be notoriously elusive, evading the clutches of one man after another. 13

In the later cantos the poem turns to consider the best method

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13. For example, Florimell escapes from the Forester, Arthur and Timias (Canto 1), the witch's son, and the monster (Canto 7), and finally the fisherman (Canto 8), before being caught by Proteus.



of holding on to a woman once she has been caught.

For Malbecco the solution is simple: he locks his wife up and guards her night and day, in the same way that he guards his gold. But while this may be a reasonable way to treat money, it is certainly no way to treat a human being. All his close watching and restraint serve not to keep his lady chaste, but only to make her lascivious. At the first opportunity Hellenore runs off with another man.

Satyrane presents a sane view of the problem, informed by a realistic insight into human nature. Malbecco's behaviour is not only cruel and unnatural, it is also ineffectual.

Extremely mad the man I surely deeme,  
That weenes with watch and hard restraint to stay  
A womans will, which is disposed to go astray.

(F.O. 3.9.6)

If anything will keep a woman from straying, Satyrane advises, it is

fast good will with gentle curtesyes,  
And timely service to her pleasures meet

(F.O. 3.9.7).

The relationship ought to be sustained by kindness and good manners, rather than by constant watching and the forced restraints of "yron bands" and "brasen walls." Marriage, for him, is founded upon a satisfying sexual relationship, which affords "kindly joy and naturall delight" (F.O. 3.9.5).

The story's conclusion bears out Satyrane's view. Hellenore makes her home among the satyrs, whose "timely service" gives such "naturall delight" that she will under no circumstances return to Malbeccops house. On the one hand Hellenore's life

can be judged as "lewd and loathsome" (F.Q. 3.10.51) as she is held in common by a troop of semi-human satyrs; yet on the other hand the freedom and joy of her new existence is such a vast improvement upon what she had before, that she cannot be blamed for choosing such a life. The episode forces us to value natural sexual freedom much more highly than the straitened condition of a marriage, which by conventional standards is morally acceptable, but which gives no delight to either partner. <sup>14</sup>

Alciati's emblem advises that watchful vigilance is necessary for the protection of unmarried girls. But the Malbecco story shows that such vigilance exercised over married women is motivated more by jealous suspicion than any real concern for the lady's welfare. Moreover, it is almost certain to prove completely ineffective. Far from keeping the lady chaste, such behaviour only corrupts her. Married women ought to be treated differently from unmarried girls: a husband keeps his wife by kindly attentiveness to her legitimate sexual needs, rather than by suspicious watchfulness. Although Satyrane's advice is not highly moral, it is at least shrewdly realistic.

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14. Spenser's views foreshadow those of Milton on marriage: "where love cannot be, there can be left of wedlock nothing, but the empty husk of an outside matrimony; as undelightfull and displeasing to God, as any other kind of hypocrisie. . . . If Salomons advice be not over-frolick, Live joyfully, saith he, with the wife whom thou lovest, all thy dayes, for that is thy portion. How then, where we finde it impossible to rejoyce or to love, can we obey this precept?" John Milton, The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, in Selected Prose, edited by C.A. Patrides (Harmondsworth 1974), p. 140.

The statue of Cupid seems partly to embody Satyrane's view that married women are not restrained by close watching. Cupid has replaced Minerva, and the dragon's eyes are rendered redundant. But this apparent endorsement of the lessons of the Malbecco story is attended by a heavy qualification of its conclusions. While Hellenore's life among the satyrs presents sex as a fulfilling experience, in the House of Busyrane sex is a kind of sadistic torture. For Hellenore sex is the means of her liberation from captivity in Malbecco's house, but sex, or sexual fear, is the reason for Amoret's imprisonment in the House of Busyrane. <sup>15</sup>

The statue of Cupid is an image of marriage, which is presented by a modification of the traditional emblem of Minerva and the dragon. In passing from virginity to marriage a woman passes from Minerva's tutelage to Cupid's, while the dragon's watchful eyes are put out by Cupid's dart of sexual passion. But there is something more than a little wrong with this image. As Lewis noticed, Spenser consistently associates the armed and blindfolded Cupid with the malicious deity who promotes sexual passion indiscriminately, while the Cupid who represents chaste affection and contented married love is unarmed and seeing. <sup>16</sup>

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15. See Roche, p. 80f.; Fowler, *Triumphal Forms*, p. 53.

16. Lewis, *Spenser's Images of Life*, pp. 19-22. For the emblematic image of the armed Cupid, see illustration. 12.





Here there is no trace whatever of "kindly joy and natural delight." The statue is in fact an imperfect image of marriage. The Cupid who triumphs over the dragon seems particularly cruel and sadistic: the dragon's eyes are not only rendered redundant, but are pitilessly knocked out. Further, Cupid seems to glory in his conquest over the chaste dragon, exulting in his aggressive and masterful dominance.

The armed and blindfolded Cupid in the statue represents aggressive male lust and sexual desire, interested only in its own gratification. His blindfold, representing not so much his blindness, but his desire not to see, and his proud disdain of the dragon's powers of sight, show his complete disregard of the hurt he causes others. This image presents marriage as an institution which subserves male prurience. The male-dominated relationship is based only upon physical possession.

Cupid's dominance is confirmed by the fact that the statue is an Idol, to which people bow down and worship. Sex here is exalted to a position of unnatural pre-eminence. While Malbecco treated Hellenore in the same way as he did his gold, locking her up like some valuable possession; in the House of Busyrane marriage is regarded solely in terms of physical and sexual possession. One form of captivity is just as cruel and unnatural as the other.

## II. THE STATUE OF VENUS.

Right in the midst the Goddess selfe did stand  
 Upon an altar of some costly masse,  
 Whose substance was uneath to understand:  
 For neither pretious stone, nor durefull brasse,  
 Nor shining gold, nor mouldring clay it was;  
 But much more rare and pretious to esteeme,  
 Pure in aspect, and like to christall glasse,  
 Yet glasse was not, if one did rightly deeme,  
 But being faire and brickle, likest glasse did seeme.

But it in shape and beautie did excell  
 All other Idoles, which the heathen adore,  
 Farre passing that, which by surpassing skill  
Phidias did make in Paphos Isle of yore,  
 With which that wretched Greeke, that life forlore,  
 Did fall in love: yet this much fairer shined,  
 But covered with a slender veile afore;  
 And both her feete and legs together twyned  
 Were with a snake, whose head and tail were fast combyned.

The cause why she was covered with a vele,  
 Was hard to know, for that her Priests the same  
 From peoples knowledge labour'd to concele.  
 But sooth it was not sure for womanish shame,  
 Nor any blemish, which the worke mote blame;  
 But for, they say, she hath both kinds in one,  
 Both male and female, both under one name;  
 She syre and mother is her selfe alone,  
 Begets and eke conceives, ne needeth other none.

(F.Q. 4.10. 39-41)

### i

Normally we would expect Venus, not Cupid, to be the patron deity of a married woman. Properly, control ought to pass from Minerva not to Cupid, but to Venus. Several emblems celebrate the contrast between unmarried Minerva and married Venus. Plutarch states this contrast most succinctly

Beside the statue of Athena Pheidias placed the serpent and in Elis beside the statue of Aphrodite the tortoise, to indicate that maidens need watching, and that for married women staying at home and silence is becoming. 17

From this opposition Junius derives his twenty-fourth emblem, VIRGINEM PUDICITIAE, MATRONAM DOMUS SATAGERE? depicting on the one hand Minerva with her dragon and on the other Venus and her tortoise. 18

The iconographic details of Spenser's image of Venus - the fastening together of her legs, the snake biting its own tail, and the goddess's hermaphroditic condition - identify her as a representation of perfect marital union. It expresses an ideal perfection, to which the image of Cupid aspires but fails to attain.

## ii

Spenser's image of Venus "covered with a slender veile afore; / And both her feete and legs together twyned" is related to the ancient statue of Venus Morpho, described by Pausanias as veiled and wearing fetters upon her feet. "The story is that the fetters were put on her by Tyndareus, who symbolized by the bonds the faithfulness of wives to their husbands." 19 Valeriano records the veiled, fettered Venus as a hieroglyph of marital concord,

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17. Plutarch, Isis and Osiris, 381 E-F, p. 177.

18. Junius, Emblem 24, p. 30 (see illustration 13).

19. Pausanias, Description of Greece, Vol. 2, translated by W.H.S. Jones and H.A. Ormerod (London and New York 1926), LACONIA xv, 10-11, pp. 94-97.



and claims that the name Venus is given to the mother of love, because it is derived from the word viere, meaning to bind.<sup>20</sup> Elsewhere Valeriano alludes to the shackled feet of Venus as a symbol of continence.<sup>21</sup> Ammirato adduces the statue of Venus as an example of the strange details of ancient statuary which conceal many profound mysteries: her fetters show the firm faith with which wives should be linked to their husbands.<sup>22</sup> Junius adapts this statue of the bound Venus in his emblem UXORIAE DOTES, to illustrate the fact that chaste modesty, constancy in love, and attendance to household duties are fitting for a wife.<sup>23</sup> In his notes to the emblem he interprets the fetters as "the close and indissoluble bond of conjugal love."<sup>24</sup> Ripa's image of matrimony depicts a man with his feet bound in the stocks of continence, treading underfoot the viper of vice.<sup>25</sup>

## iii

It would seem fairly conclusive, then, that Spenser is employing the image of the goddess's bound feet and legs as

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- 20. Valeriano, Lib. 48, s.v. De Laqueo, p. 516.
  - 21. Valeriano, Lib. 33, s.v. Continentia, p. 351.
  - 22. Ammirato, p. 15: ". . . con quanta ferma fede dovessero esser le donne legate a i loro mariti."
  - 23. Junius, Emblem 12, p. 18 (see illustration 14): "Uxorem castus pudor, et constantia amoris, / Custodia et sui laris decet."
  - 24. "Porro compedes indissolubilis vinculi coniugalis et arctissimi amoris significationem habent."
  - 25. Ripa, Iconologia nova (Padua 1618), p. 321 (see illustration 15).

a symbol of chaste conjugal love. But where the traditional iconographic sources depict Venus bound with fetters, Spenser's Venus is bound, not with stocks or chains, but "with a snake, whose head and tail were fast combyned."

Horapollo claimed that the ancient Egyptians saw the serpent whose tail is hidden by its head as a symbol of eternity.<sup>26</sup> It was associated with the god Saturn, as an attribute signifying time.<sup>27</sup> While, with equal justice, it was applied to the machinery of the universe itself.

The Phoenicians in their sacred rites have portrayed the god in the likeness of a serpent coiled and swallowing its own tail, as a visible image of the universe which feeds on itself and returns to itself again.<sup>28</sup>

Of particular relevance to Spenser's statue of Venus, but basic to all these traditional meanings of the ancient symbol, is the sexual significance of the serpent: the universe is sustained, and the ravages of time repaired, through the process of procreative generation.<sup>29</sup> Spenser's image depicts a conjugal love sustained

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26. Horapollo, l.1. See also Minois's comment on Alciati Emblem 132, p. 475: "~~Serpens~~ in se revolutus, aeternitatem designat." See also the collection of references in Tervarent, s.v. Serpent en forme de cercle, i Éternité ou éternel.

27. See Tervarent, s.v. Serpent en forme de cercle, ii Attribut du Temps. See also Cartari, s.v. Saturno, p. 14.

28. Macrobius, *The Saturnalia*, 1.9.12, p. 67. See also Horapollo 1.2, and Valeriano, Lib. 14, p. 137, s.v. Mundi Machina.

29. For the sexual reading of the serpent, and its comparison with the serpents of the caduceus, see Fowler, *Spenser and the Numbers of Time*, p. 164 and p. 164n. 3.

not by the fetters of Venus Morpho but by a fulfilled marital union, which conquers time through generation.

Similarly conscious of this symbolism Vaenius depicted AMOR AETERNUS, as a wide-eyed, seeing Cupid, seated within the circle formed by a snake biting its own tail. The emblem characterizes this married love in terms of the circular serpent, without beginning or end.<sup>30</sup>

## iv

The veil in the ancient image of Venus Morpho betokened "castus pudor," or chaste modesty. But Spenser, apparently intent on overgoing

All other Idoles, which the heathen adore

(F.Q. 4.10.40),

specifically denies that the veil in his statue of Venus has anything at all to do with "womanish shame." Here the veil conceals a profound mystery: that the goddess contains both sexes in one person. This double-sexed Venus, more properly the Venus Hermaphroditos, received much learned commentary from the Renaissance mythographers, but it was commonly held to signify the union of male and female in the one flesh of matrimony.<sup>31</sup>

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30. Otto Vaenius, Emblemata Amorum (Antwerp 1608), p. 1 (see illustration 17.)

31. For discussions of Venus Hermaphroditos, see Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p. 163 and p. 163n. 2, and Wind, pp. 77n., 129, 200, 211ff. See also the cancelled stanzas at the end of the 1590 ed. of The Faerie Queene,



Aneau adopts his/her image in an emblem of marriage.<sup>32</sup>

The statue of Venus is an exemplary statement of sexual henosis in marriage. But it also symbolizes an individual perfection, a psychic wholeness and completeness. Further, the statue affirms universal concord, achieved through the cosmic cycle of procreation and generation. At the basis of individual and universal concord lies the mystery of sexual union: the snake's "anneau nœcier"<sup>33</sup> which binds the goddess's both parts in one.

Spenser's exemplary image of perfect marriage shows a relationship that is not sustained by captivity, or jealous watching, but by a deeply satisfying sexual relationship. Faith and loyalty are not exacted by physical or moral restraint, but are achieved through sexual union. In such a union the individual achieves psychic wholeness and completeness, while the social and cosmic fabric of the world is maintained.

### III. THE STATUES OF CUPID AND VENUS

One of Spenser's characteristic structural devices is to contrast in detail images that exist some distance apart in the poem. The result is that one image cannot be properly

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3.12.45-46. A.R. Cirillo, "Spenser's 'Faire Hermaphrodite,'" *PQ*, 47 (1968), 136-7 and Donald Cheney, "Spenser's Hermaphrodite and the 1590 Faerie Queene," *PMLA*, 87 (1972), 192-200 discuss traditional interpretations of the Hermaphrodite.

32. B. Aneau, Imagination Poétique (Lyons 1552), p. 19 (see our illustration 16).

33. Vaenius, Emblemata Amorum, p. 1

understood without reference to the other:

Throughout, moral emblems, mythological entities, and symbolic attributes often appear twice over, in true and false forms, which can scarcely be understood separately from one another. 34

Such is the case with the Statues of Cupid and Venus. 35 The first is an image of an imperfect marriage, the second an image of complete marital concord. A close comparison of the significant details of the first statue with those of the second reveals the deficiencies of the love represented by Cupid in contrast with the perfection of married love.

The significant contrasts seem to be as follows:

<u>CUPID</u>	<u>VENUS</u>
stands "at the upper end"	stands "right in the midst"
"an Image"	"the Goddess selfe"
blindfold	"covered with a slender veile"
wounded dragon	"snake, whose head and tail were fast combyned"
left foot enfolded by drdragon's tail	"feete and legs together twyned" with the snake
male	"Both male and female"

34. Fowler, "Emanations of glory," p. 69.

35. In certain respects the Statue of Isis, F.O. 5.7. 6-7 deserves to be included in this discussion of large scale juxtaposition of image and image. The reason I have left it out is partly because the models for this statue are not strictly emblematic, and partly because illustration of the general methods of reading The Faerie Queene is complicated enough without it. Parallels between image and image are often complex and unexpected: see Fowler's illuminating comparison of the substance beneath the statue of Venus and the substance which composes the fountain in the Bowre of Bliss ("Emanations of glory," pp. 69-71).

While the statue of Venus is the goddess herself, the statue of Cupid is but an "Image," one of the "thousand monstrous formes" of "false love" (F.Q. 3.11.51), which inhabit the house of Busyrane. It represents a distorted perversion of the true form of marriage represented elsewhere. Its position "at the upper end" of the room betrays Cupid's assertion of his rights to ambitious dominance, not only over the dragon, but also over all the people in the house. Venus, on the other hand, occupies the central point of the building. The central positioning of the statue emphasizes the primacy of the sexual: the relationship is not maintained by masculine assertiveness but by generative union. Cupid's blindfold shows his ignorance and cruelty; Venus's veil at once conceals and reveals the mysterious nature of this sexual union. Where Cupid's darts blatantly assert the consummation of marriage in terms of phallic penetration, Venus's veil betoken[s] a modesty and chastity,<sup>36</sup> which do not preclude but are part of the sacred henosis. The wounded dragon portrays the hurt and injury which such a dominating love cause; while the snake "whose head and tail were fast combyned" show the wholeness and completeness of the ideal relationship. The dragon's tail which enfolds the god's left foot pathetically attempts to imitate the snake's binding together of the feet and legs of the goddess, but the attempt is rendered impossible by the god's masculine dominance and assertiveness. Where the goddess includes "both male and female," Cupid is aggressively and indomitably male.

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36. For the veil as an attribute of modesty, see Ripa, s.v. Pudicitia.



The statue of Cupid represents a marital union of sorts, but it is an incomplete and unsatisfactory union. Amoret is imprisoned in the house, chained to a blatantly phallic pillar. The traditional image of Venus Morpho was bound, with the chains of marital fidelity. In the house of Busyrane marital fidelity has become the means of Amoret's cruel imprisonment, tortured by Busyrane simply because she will not be unfaithful to Scudamour (see F.Q. 3.11,17). Marriage is seen as a male dominated institution, exacting loyalty and fidelity. In the statue of Venus loyalty and continence are embraced in harmonious sexual union.

## ii

Spenser's profound meditation upon the agalmata of antiquity is no mere antiquarian exercise. The emblems are adjusted to his own comprehensive vision, which at once employs and evaluates the images of the past.

### CHAPTER THREE: ALLEGORICAL EMBLEMS.

The allegorical emblem seeks to represent moral abstractions in terms of human figures.<sup>1</sup> The figure's age, expression, the proportion of its body, the disposition of its limbs, the colour and condition of the clothes it wears, are all chosen to portray the nature and the effects of some psychological or moral quality.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the allegorical figure is given some identifying attribute derived from the more or less current language of symbolism. Frequently the symbolic identifying attribute was simply traditional, the iconologist merely following the precedent set by the ancients. In such a representation the artist was obliged to get his symbols right, so that his figures would at least be recognized by those who viewed them.<sup>3</sup>

Figures of this kind abound in The Faerie Queene. Spenser, in the Jacobean period was evidently considered something of an authority on the correct methods of presenting allegorical figures.<sup>4</sup> In the eighteenth century these figures were held

1. Menestrier, p. 33.

2. Ripa (Rome 1603), sig. †1.

3. Ripa's Iconologia is the most encyclopaedic and popular collection of personified abstractions. But Alciati's Emblemata does present a number of allegorical emblems: for example, Emblem 11, SILENTIUM; Emblem 27, NEC VERBO, NEC FACTO QUENQUAM LAEDENDUM; Emblem 65, FATUITAS; Emblem 68, IMPUDENTIA; Emblem 69, PHILAUTIA; Emblem 71, INVIDIA; Emblem 72, LUXURIA; Emblem 79, LASCIVIA, etc. On the emblematic presentation of personifications, see Rosemary Freeman, English Emblem Books (1948), pp. 41-42.

4. Henry Peacham, The Compleat Gentleman (1634), pp. 99-108 gives a list of personified abstractions some taken from The Faerie Queene. See Freeman, p. 71.

to "affect the Mind with Wonder and Delight, and enliven and beautify the Poem";<sup>5</sup> this faint praise was also tinged with condemnation: Spense dismissed Spenser's allegorical personages as nothing less than "Ridiculous Imaginations."<sup>6</sup>

Part of the problem is that attributes which were familiar to Spenser's audience, are no longer familiar to his modern readers, indeed to many of his readers since the eighteenth century. On the other hand, part of the problem is caused by Spenser's originality and inventiveness in his composition of allegorical figures. While he retains enough of the traditional figure to make it recognizable, he changes it in such a way as to cause the reader familiar with the emblematic original to rethink conventional assumptions about the moral state under discussion. The figures are often familiar, yet subtly altered from what we expect. Lewis was right when he noticed two dominant characteristics of Spenser's "translations into the visible of feelings else blind and inarticulate": the first Spenser's "humble fidelity to the popular symbols which he found ready made to his hand;" the second "his profound sympathy with that which makes the symbols."<sup>7</sup> Often one can see Spenser's profound sympathy and insight working upon and adjusting the ready-made symbols to his own allegorical design.

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5. Sir Richard Blackmore, Essays upon Several Subjects (1716), pp. 41-42, cited in R.M. Cummings, Spenser: The Critical Heritage (1971), p. 227.

6. Cited in Spenser Variorum, 1. 366.

7. C.S. Lewis, Allegory of Love, pp. 312-313.



When Spence condemned Spenser for his "Ridiculous Imaginations," he declared that the poet may have been led "now and then to say things that are ridiculouse, where he meant to be very serious."<sup>8</sup> But the motto of the emblemist was precisely this: "serio ludere," and it was his task to treat the most serious things under a veil of gentle mockery.<sup>9</sup> These "Ridiculous Imaginations" often include a secret wit, combining different images into a new personification, which presents conventional truths in a new, challenging way.

To catalogue all the moral abstractions in The Faerie Queene would be a task for a thesis in itself, calling upon other sources than the emblematic ones that form the basis of this study. In this chapter I merely wish to examine two instances of Spenser's adaptation of an emblematic model to the needs of his allegorical design.

#### I. OCCASION. <sup>10</sup>

And him behind, a wicked Hag did stalke,  
In ragged robes, and filthy disaray,  
Her other leg was lame, that she no'te walke.  
But on a staffe her feeble steps did stay;  
Her lockes, that loathly were and hoarie gray,  
Grew all afore, and loosely hong unrold,

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8. Spenser Variorum, 1. 366.
  9. Bocchi introduces the phrase into the title of his Symbolicae quaestiones: "quas serio ludebat." For discussion of this principle, see Wind, p. 236.
  10. See John Manning and Alastair Fowler, "The Iconography of Spenser's Occasion," JWI, 39 (1976), 263-266.

But all behind was bald, and worne away,  
That none thereof could ever taken hold,  
And eke her face ill favourd, full of wrinckles old.

And ever as she went, her tongue did walke  
In foule reproch, and termes of vile despight,  
Provoking him by her outrageous talke,  
To heape more vengeance on that wretched wight. . .

(F.O. 2.4.4-5).

i

Spenser's use of the traditional emblems of Occasio in this description has already been noticed.<sup>11</sup> But he departs from the emblematic model. Indeed, he transmutes the traditional figure into one specially functional in his allegory of Temperance, with an iconological sophistication which seems not to have been fully appreciated.

ii

The emblem books image Occasione a young, vigorous, naked woman with winged heels, standing (often in the midst of the ocean) upon a sphere or wheel. In one hand she holds a razor, in the other a billowing sail or scarf.<sup>12</sup> Spenser, however, represents Occasion as an old, ill-favoured hag, lame in one leg and clothed in rags. The traditional Occasio is young, vital, comely; Spenser's old, feeble, ugly. The emblematic

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11. James G. McManaway, "'Occasion', Faerie Queene II, iv, 4-5," MLN, 49 (1934), 391-393. See also Alpers, pp. 209-214.

12. A composite description derived from Occasio's various

figure goes naked; Spenser's wears "ragged robes." Again, the lameness of the hag, who supports her "feeble steps" with a staff, contrasts with the winged heels and sphere, emblems of swiftness.<sup>13</sup> As for the attributes of Occasio that link her explicitly with Fortune (the scarf, sail, waves and ships)<sup>14</sup> they are omitted altogether in Spenser's description.

appearances in a number of emblem books. See our illustration 18. See, for example, Andrea Alciati, Emblematum Liber (Augsburg 1531), sig. A 8 and subsequent edns; Guillaume de la Perriere, La theatre des bons engins (Paris 1540), Emblem 63; Gilles Corrozet, Hecatomgraphie (Paris 1540), ed. C. Oulment (Paris 1905), p. 167; G. Whitney, A Choice of Emblemes (Leyden 1586), p. 181. The emblems are derived from Posidippus's epigram 'In Occasionem' in The Greek Anthology, 16.275. Alciati gives a Latin translation of this epigram, while La Perriere gives a French translation. For the relationship of the classical Occasio with the Occasio of the emblem books see the following articles: J.E. Matzke, "On the Source of the Italian and English Idioms meaning 'To Take Time by the Forelock'," PMLA, 8 (1893), 303-334; K. Pietsch, "On the Source of 'To Take Time by the Forelock'," MLN, 8 (1893), 469-75; G.L. Kittredge, "'To Take Time by the Forelock'," MLN, 8 (1893), 459-69; R. Wittkower, "Chance, Time and Virtue," JWI, 1 (1937-8), 313-321; R. Wittkower, "Patience and Chance," JWI, 1 (1937-8), 172-7; G. Kirchner, Fortuna in Dichtung und Emblematik des Barock (Stuttgart 1970), pp. 27-33; H. Rüdiger, "Göttin Gelegenheit: Gestaltwandel einer Allegorie," Arcadia, 1-2 (1966), pp. 121-66.

13. Claude Minois in his commentary on Alciati's emblem 121, IN OCCASIONEM claims that the winged heels signify the speed of Occasio ('celerem et velocem, quasi alas pedibus habentem,' Alciati, p. 439), while Ambrosius Calepinus in his Dictionarium (Basel 1628), states that the winged heels and the ball symbolize Occasio's brevity and inconstancy ('Occasionis brevitatem et inconstantiam').
14. For these attributes of Fortune see H.R. Patch, The Goddess Fortuna in Mediaeval Literature (Cambridge, Mass. 1927): for the scarf as sail, see pp. 102-4; for the marine association pp. 101ff, 106. Renaissance notions of Fortune and Occasio became almost synonymous, so that Typotius could describe the figure with the long forelock standing on a winged ball as 'fortunam vel occasionem,' fortune or occasion (J. Typotius, Symbola divina et humana, Vol. 1 (Prague 1600), p. 56.



Indeed, the only features in common between the traditional and the Spenserian Occasions are the long forelock and bald occiput. And even to these (admittedly striking) features Spenser gives a new interpretation. In the emblem books, the long forelock invites us to seize our opportunity as it presents itself.<sup>15</sup> But in the context of Spenser's allegory of Temperance, the lock becomes a temptation to rash violence.<sup>16</sup> Instead of offering the promise of benefits, it seems repulsive, 'loathly.' In the same way, the bald occiput, which indicates that Occasio cannot be grasped by afterthought, traditionally symbolized the loss suffered by those who have let opportunity slip. But the bald occiput of Spenser's Occasion becomes, as we shall see, a symbol either of the remorse that follows succumbing to an evil occasion, an inducement to wrath,<sup>17</sup> or else the frustration of not grasping the opportunity (in which case the wrathful passions turn back upon the self). Thus when Guyon finally grasps Occasion by the forelock it is not to possess and enjoy the benefits traditionally supposed to accrue from this action, but rather to restrain her. By forcibly binding and gagging her, he stills her incitements to wrath.

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15. 'What means long locks before? that such as meet, / May hold at first, when they occasion find. / Thy head behind all bald, what tells it more? / That none should hold, that let me slip before' (G. Whitney, p. 181). The spelling, but not the punctuation, has been modernized.

16. Indicated in the allegory by the genealogical relationship between Occasion and Furor: "she doth enrage / Her franticke sonne, and kindles his courage" (F.Q. 2.4.11). G.W. Kitchin first identified Occasion as 'Occasion to wrath' in his edn Spenser: Book II of the Faerie Queene (Oxford 1895), p. 193.

17. In the sense "inducement to sin," OED s.v. Occasion 2.

The changes Spenser made in the traditional figure of Occasio - clothing her in rags, making her old, ugly and lame - all express, in iconological terms, aspects of the occasion or "root of wrath" (F.Q. 2.4.10). This is done by a combinatorial method. Spenser combines recognizable attributes from several emblematic images, to form a composite image indicating precise qualities of a new character.<sup>18</sup> The significance of this iconographic representation, as often in The Faerie Queene, is expanded or 'unfolded' in the narrative. Here, Occasion's relations with Phedon and with Guyon bring out the meaning of several details of her description.

iii

Phedon, who was intemperate enough to kill both his beloved and his friend in a fit of jealous rage, encountered Occasion while in pursuit of the maid Pryene, the cause of his jealousy. He meant to kill her too, in revenge for the murders she unwittingly led him to commit. Occasion and Furor appear suddenly as if conjured up, in mid-chase, by Phedon's vengeful purpose:

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18. McManaway grasped the essential method when he suggested that Spenser's Occasion incorporated features of the emblematic descriptions of Envy and Discord. However, he was mistaken as to the identity of the figures making up the composite image of Occasion. None of the traditional features of either Envy or Discord occur in Spenser's description. Envy's snake, and the torch and bellows usually associated with Discord are all absent. The only common feature is an extremely general one, that all are hags. For the attributes of Envy see, for example, Alciati, Emblem 71, INVIDIA or Cesare Ripa, Iconologia (Rome 1603), pp. 241-3; for Discord, see Hadrianus Junius, Emblemata (Antwerp 1565), Emblem 54, DISCORDIA EXITIALIS, Ripa, pp. 104-6, or Vincenzo Cartari, Imagini delli dei de gl'Antichi (Venice 1647), p. 211.

Feare gave her wings, and rage enforst my flight;  
 Through woods and plaines so long I did her chace,  
 Till this mad man, whom your victorious might  
 Hath now fast bound, me met in middle space,  
 As I her, so he me pursewd apace,  
 And shortly overtooke: I breathing yre,  
 Sore chauffed at my stay in such a cace,  
 And with my heat kindled his cruell fyre;  
 Which kindled once, his mother did more rage inspyre.

(F.Q. 2.4.32).

Phedon's furious pursuit of Pryene finds a counterpart in Furor's pursuit of him. Indeed, Furor's rage is a direct consequence and imitation of Phedon's. The resemblance extends to Occasion's relationship with Furor: just as Occasion incited her son to fury, so Phedon's desire for vengeance drove him to pursue Pryene.

This tableau of the guilty Phedon pursued by Furor and Occasion instantly recalls Vaenius's emblem CULPAM POENA PREMIT COMES, in which a murderer carrying a drawn sword and a woman's head flees from a lame woman. The woman is encumbered by a basket containing among other things a bridle, but she manages to wield a scourge of snakes over the malefactor.<sup>19</sup> Though the motto or 'emblem' is CULPAM POENA PREMIT COMES ('Punishment comes close in the footsteps of guilt'), an essential feature of Poena is her lameness. Vaenius glosses it with an Horatian tag 'raro antecedentem scelestum / deseruit pede Poena claudo'<sup>20</sup> and also cites Valerius Maximus on the slow inexorability of divine punishment, 'Lento gradu ad vindictam sui divina ira: / tarditatemque suplicit gravitate compensat.'<sup>21</sup>

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19. Otto van Veen, Q. Horatii Flacci Emblemata (Antwerp 1607). See illustration 19.

20. 'Punishment with her lame foot rarely foresakes the fleeing criminal', Horace, Odes III, ii, 31-2.

21. 'Divine wrath proceeds to vengeance with slow step: but it makes up for its slowness with its severity.'



The lameness of Spenser's Occasion is in some ways strikingly similar. Just as Poena pursues a murderer with slow and halting steps, so Occasion pursues Phedon, supporting her feeble steps with a staff. However, there are also differences. Poena represents the inexorable vengeance of divine wrath, whereas Occasion seems more like a human vengeance (Phedon's hasty rage), which presumes to usurp the divine prerogative. Furor's and Occasion's punishment of Phedon, on the other hand, may be seen as a retribution, overwhelming Phedon with his own revengeful anger. When Occasion calls to Furor 'to heape more vengeance on that wretched wight' (F.Q. 2.4.5),<sup>22</sup> she is almost acting as a Poena who punishes Phedon for his crimes, at the same time as she embodies his desire for vengeance.

Almost, but not quite. Occasion is no true image of divine retribution. At best she is a travesty of it, a daemonic Nemesis,<sup>23</sup> so far from having the bridle of restraint among her attributes that she must herself be bridled by Guyon. (The 'iron lock' which he put on her tongue is a 'scold's bridle.') And instead of silencing those who "take in wicked speech delight"<sup>24</sup>

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22. Occasion also incites Furor to vengeance at F.Q. 2.4.12.

23. Nemesis in the emblem books is depicted as a sober lady holding a bridle and bit. See illustration 20. See, for example, Alciati, Emblem 27, NEC VERBO, NEC FACTO QUENQUAM LAEDENDUM, and Whitney, p. 19. The significance of the bridle and bit is explained by Whitney as follows: 'A rein she holds . . . With biting bit, where with the lewd she stays: / And pulls them back, when harm they do intend, / Or when they take in wicked speech delight.'

24. Whitney, p. 19.

Occasion herself delights in it: "And ever as she went, her tongue did walke / In foule reproch, and termes of vile despight" (2.4.5). Thus she quite neglects the ordering function of Nemesis, preferring to concentrate on the talion punishment of revenge.

## iv

Some indication of the specific kind of retribution explored in Spenser's Occasion may be found in an incident in Boiardo's Orlando Innamorato. When Orlando failed to grasp the beautiful Fata Morgana's forelock, and was vainly pursuing her bald occiput, he suddenly found himself set upon by an old hag with a flail. 'Io son la Penitenza', she exclaimed. In other words, the consequence of failing to grasp the forelock of Fata Morgana is not just regret but bitter penitential remorse.<sup>25</sup> And it will continue until he ~~seizws~~ the forelock. In much the same way as Orlando is set upon by Penitence, Phedon (and in turn Guyon) is set upon by Occasion and Furor.

Ever since Ausonius described Metanoex seated behind Occasio, Penitence was associated with Occasio as the consequence of missing Opportunity.<sup>26</sup> But Spenser cleverly combines features from both figures in his one hag Occasion, to imply a different idea: namely, that Penitence inevitably follows if an opportunity for revenge is taken. For Occasion's ugliness,

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25. M.M. Boiardo, Orlando Innamorato, II, ix, 1-20. H.H. Blanchard first noticed the relevance of the Boiardo passage to Spenser's allegory of Occasion (Spenser Variorum 2.229).

26. Ausonius, Epigram 33, In Simulacrum Occasionis et Paenitentiae, in Ausonius, Vol. 2 (1919), 174.

tattered clothing and old age were all iconographical attributes of Penitence. In Corrozet's emblem *IMAGE D'OCCASION*, for example, Penitence appears as an ugly old woman, with her clothing in tattered disarray, seated behind Occasion.<sup>27</sup> So, too, Cartari identifies *Penitenza* by rags and ugliness.<sup>28</sup> These iconographical details, together with the *Orlando Innamorato* analogue, suggest that the specific punishment that Spenser's Occasion represents is Penitence for an act of ill-considered anger. As *Penitenza* pursues Orlando, so Occasion pursues Phedon. But whereas Orlando suffers for failing to grasp Fata Morgana's lovely forelock, Phedon, "brought to mischief through occasion" (2.4.17), is beaten for having successfully grasped a less attractive forelock - that is, for having given way to revengeful anger. The effect is immediate remorse: "With wrathfull hand I slew her innocent; / That after soone I dearely did lament" (2.4.29). Moreover, he suffers "griefe and furie" (2.4.33), externalized in his physical suffering at Furor's hands. This takes the form of his being dragged "by the haire along upon the ground" (2.4.3): a scrupulously *talion* punishment for having grasped the offered hair of Evil Occasion. It is with some psychological subtlety that Spenser here combines in one figure both the temptation to rash anger, which leads Phedon to commit his crime, and the state of remorse that follows it.

## v

Guyon meets Occasion in stranger, and in psychologically

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27. Corrozet, 167. See illustration 21.

28. 'Penitenza, con certi pochi pannè intorno tutti logori,' Cartari, p. 244.



more elusive circumstances. He sees, or at least "seemed for to see" (F.Q. 2.4.3.), a handsome youth being beaten by a madman. ~~With~~ Hudibrastic rashness, he hastens to separate the two combatants and at once finds himself the victim of the madman Furor. It is not difficult to see that Guyon has taken Phedon's place as a victim of Furor: he is acting out, as we say, the same fole of frenzy. But there is a difference. Phedon encountered Occasion and Furor through his fury, Guyon through his 'great remorse' (2.4.6). Moreover, Guyon is not overthrown by Furor's strength, but by himself:

To overthrow him strongly did assay,  
But overthrew himselfe unwares, and lower lay.  
And being downe the villein sore did beat,  
And bruze with clownish fistes his manly face.

(F.Q. 2.4.8-9)

Guyon's self-inflicted fall resembles nothing so much as the internal, self-flagellating violence of an excessively demanding remorse. Thus, as he suffers Furor's blows he simultaneously suffers the "reproch and odious menace" and the "reprochfull blame" of Occasion (F.Q. 2.4.9 and 2.4.11). Guyon is incapacitated, in fact, by self-recrimination. The same exacting morality that at first led him into ill-considered intervention now hinders and frustrates him. Fortunately, the Palmer can explain that Guyon suffers from Frenzy (furor) because he has not restrained Furor's mother, or cause, Occasion's "reprochfull blame":

With her, who so will raging Furor tame,  
Must first begin, and well her amenge:  
First her restraine from her reprochfull blame.

(F.Q. 2.4.11)

In this initial encounter with Furor, Guyon seems to turn upon himself the violence which Phedon directs against others. The rash desire for justice that leads Phedon into revenge results in Guyon's case in the sufferings of self-reproach. It is altogether a more internal, introjected form of experience.

Occasion's unbalanced form, combining one good leg and one lame leg, may perhaps be said to embody the strong and weak passions of rashness and remorse. She brings together in her person, as it were, the extremes of wrath and grief which tempt Guyon throughout the first half of Book Two.<sup>29</sup> This unbalanced form of Occasion finds a later echo in the two hags who attend Malegar:

And yet the one her other legge had lame,  
Which with a staffe, all full of little snags  
She did support, and Impotence her name:  
But th'other was Impatience, arm'd with raging  
flame.

(F.Q. 2.11.23)

Here the allegory is very much more general. But perhaps there is a retrospective implication that Occasion's active part is like Impatience,<sup>30</sup> her weak, lame, passive side like Impotence.

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29. See F.Q. 2.3.3; 2.4.33; 2.6.1. Grief and wrath are later paired at 2.4.12-13, 3.12, 16-17 and 5.6.17.

30. At F.Q. 2.5.22 Occasion adds the flaming torch of discord and impatience to her armory.

II. Ate.

Her face most fowle and filthy was to see,  
 With squinted eyes contrarie wayes intended,  
 And loathly mouth, unmeete a mouth to bee,  
 That nought but gall and venim comprehended,  
 And wicked wordes that God and man offended:  
 Her lying tongue was in two parts divided,  
 And bpth the parts did speake, and both contended;  
 And as her tongue, so was her hart discided,  
 That never thocht one thing, but doubly stil was guided.

Als as she double spake, so heard she double,  
 With matchlesse eares deformed and distort,  
 Fild with false rumors and seditious trouble,  
 Bred in assemblies of the vulgar sort,  
 That still are led with every light report.  
 And as her eares so eke her feet were odde,  
 And much unlike, th'one long, the other short,  
 And both misplaet; that when th'one forward yode,  
 The other backe retired, and contrarie trode.

Likewise unequall were her handes twaine,  
 That one did reach, the other pusht away,  
 That one did make, the other mard againe,  
 And sought to bring all things unto decay. . .

(F.Q. 4.1.27-29)

## i

The "monstrous shape" with which Spenser endows his creature Ate, the enemy of Concord in Book Four of The Faerie Queene, has generally been taken as a sure sign that this character is meant to represent discord.<sup>31</sup> Her features are unbalanced,

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31. For Ate as Discord, see Alpers, p. 212; J.B. Dallett, "The Faerie Queene, IV, i-v: A Synopsis of Discord," MLN, 75 (1960), 639-643; A. Kent Hieatt, "Spenser's Atin from 'Atine'?" MLN, 72 (1957), 250: "Ate is the principle of discord itself - the specious voice that enumerates the circumstances making for disagreement and that can bankrupt the kind of friendly relationships which lack a firm foundation in character." The Cambridge marginalian glosses Ate as "calamitas: De [a]



her members struggle against one another, everything about her is engaged in contention and division: her eyes look in opposite directions, her tongue like her heart, is split into two parts, her feet are of unequal size, and both walk in opposite directions, while one hand seeks to undo the work of the other.

Spenser's description of discord seems to be iconologically unique.<sup>32</sup> And yet we might be forgiven if, instead of praising the iconological originality of this figure, we rather thought the whole idea rather naive. Every detail embodies similar notions of discord and contention, which are transferred to the parts of the human body so literally, that the whole thing becomes bizarre and rather absurd.<sup>33</sup>

But such a judgment can only be made if we think that

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quae noxas inmittit mo [r] talibus. sc. Discord mallice sclaunder," see "MS Notes to Spenser's 'Faerie Queene'," *N & Q*, 202 (1957), 509-515. For Ate as Strife, see Fowler, *Spenser and the Numbers of Time*, p. 8n.1 and p. 30.

32. "The description of her [Ate's] physical appearance is apparently original" (Lotspeich, cited in *Spenser Variorum*, 4. 169). Spence lists Ate among "such allegories of Spenser as are purely of his own invention" (cited *Spenser Variorum*, 1.364). The usual features of Discord are snaky locks, bound with bloody fillets; she holds a bellows and a torch, and fans a fire with her bellows. See Junius, Emblem 54, *DISCORDIA EXITIALIS*, and notes pp. 145-146; Philippe Galle, *Prosopographia*, *DISCORDIA*; and Ripa, s.v. *Discordia*. Cartari, p. 211 traces this description back to classical sources in Virgil and Petronius. Several emblems use the myth of Ate's expulsion from heaven (Homer, *Iliad*, 9. 502ff., and 19.91ff.) to illustrate the beginnings of Discord: see, for example, Alciati, Emblem 130, *REMEDIA IN ARDUO*, *MAIA IN PRONO ESSE?* and Corrozet, Emblem 63, *DISCORDE HAYE DE DIEU*. In neither of these emblems does the description of Ate resemble Spenser's personification.
33. "There is a duplicity in his figure of Discord, which is carried on so far as to be quite preposterous. He makes her hear double, and look two different ways; he splits her tongue, and even her heart, in two: and makes her act

Spenser is here personifying a general notion of discord, multiplying unnecessarily particular instances of antagonism expressed by the human body. Rather, Spenser personifies a quite specific type of discord in his description of Ate, and has indicated this notion by the iconological details in Ate's physical make up.

## ii

Spenser best provides his own gloss on Ate's iconography, for she is a composite figure who includes the distinguishing characteristics of many of those vices which threaten the "publike state" in the second part of The Faerie Queene, and bears the attributes of some of those passions which seek to upset the "private" virtues of the first three books.<sup>34</sup> Standing at the beginning of the second part of the poem, Ate sums up the threats to the individual's psychological control, which have been treated in the poem's early books, and proleptically indicates the threats

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contrarily with her two hands; and walk forward with one foot, and backward with the other, at the same time" (Spence, cited in Spenser Variorum 1.364). See the other attacks on the inconsistencies and absurdities of the presentation of Ate in R. Gottfried, "The Pictorial Element in Spenser's Poetry"; and in W.J.B. Owen, "Narrative Logic and Imitation in The Faerie Queene," CL, 7 (1955), 328ff.

34. For the distinction between "publike" and private in the description of Ate, see F.Q. 4.1.19. The distinction is further elaborated in the description of Ate's dwelling: within her house there are monuments of broken friendship, of "unnaturall" brethren, and of love turned to enmity (F.Q. 4.1.24); while outside her house there is desolation caused by "Tumultuous trouble and contentious jarre," "bloudshed" and "warre" (F.Q. 4.1.25). For the division of the poem into two, the first group of published Books

to political and social stability, which are examined in the second set of three books. <sup>35</sup>

Ate's "fowle and filthy" shape portrays in a new threatening form most of the especially nasty characteristics of Spenser's hags. <sup>36</sup> Her "squinted eyes" are like Envy's, which "did seeme to looke askew" (F.Q. 5.12.29), <sup>37</sup> while in the procession of the Seven Deadly Sins, Envy wears a "kirtle of

referring to the personal virtues (Books One to Three) and the second group (Books Four to Six) referring to the virtues of life in society, see Roche, p. 200. This, of course, is but one of the multiplicity of structures embodied in the six published books, on which see Fowler, Triumphal Forms, pp. 110-112.

35. The description of Ate's house in similar fashion refers back and forward to motifs treated elsewhere in the poem: the "many waies to enter . . . But none to issue forth when one is in" (F.Q. 4.1.20) recall the labyrinthine Wood of Error (F.Q. 1.1.7-10); the "Disshivered speares, and shields ytorne in twaine" (F.Q. 4.1.21) and the "girlonds rent" (F.Q. 4.1.24) recall the last room in Busyrane's house, where "swerds and speres were broke, and hauberques rent; / And their proud girlonds of tryumphant bayes / Troden in dust with fury insolent" (F.Q. 3.11.52) and the whole armory of broken weapons strewn throughout Book Four (4.1.48; (4.4.23); 4.4.38; 4.7.39); M.Y. Hughes notes the connection between Ate's memorials of ancient conquerors and the denizens of Lucifer's dungeon (cited in Spenser Variorum 4.167. Nevertheless, see Osgood's dissenting note, Spenser Variorum, 4.167). The memorials of the "drunken fray" between the Centaurs and the Lapiths are commemorated more auspiciously at F.Q. 6.10.13. Nohnberg, pp. 629-631 notices other parallels between Ate and events in Book Three.
36. "The divelish hag," Duessa (F.Q. 1.2.42), whose connection with Ate is expressed in the latter's double form (see Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p. 8n.1); the "wicked Hag", Occasion (F.Q. 2.4); the Witch, "that vile Hag" who took "her whole delight / In mischiefe" (F.Q. 3.7.9); those "two wicked Hags," Impotence and Impatience (F.Q. 2.11.23); "That shamefull Hag", Sclaunder (F.Q. 4.8.35); and those "two old ill favour'd Hags," Envy and Detraction (F.Q. 5.12.28).
37. Ripa's INVIDIA, has "l'occhi biechi," and looks "con occhio torto in disparte" (Rome 1603), p. 242. Doubt (i.e. Suspicion, Jealousy) "lookt askew with his mistrustfull eyes" (F.Q. 3.12.10).

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discoloured say . . . ypainted full of eyes" (F.Q. 1.4.31). Calepine, in Book Six, seeks to avoid "envious eyes that . . . spight" (F.Q. 6.3.20). Envy's "discoloured say", her biased and corrupt speech, is comprehended in the "gall and venom" which fills Ate's mouth, and which may be related to the "bloudie gore and poison" dropping from Envy's mouth (F.Q. 5.12.30) and to the "poyson" and "gall" which Sclaunde spews over the true and virtuous. Similarly, the Blatant Beast "spat out poyson and gore" (F.Q. 6.12.28), and good deeds cause Envy to "eat her gall" (F.Q. 5.12.31). In his transformation into "Gealosie", Malbecco is corrupted with "gall vitious" (F.Q. 3.10.59).

Ate's "lying tongue . . . in two parts divided" is like Detraction's tongue, which "Appear'd like Aspis sting" (F.Q. 5.12.36), and like Sclaunder's "spightfull words" "like the stings of Aspes" (F.Q. 4.8.26),<sup>38</sup> while the Blatant Beast's "thousand tongs . . . / . Of sundry kindes, and sundry quality" (F.Q. 6.12.17), exemplify the same principle multiplied five hundred times.

Her "discided" heart<sup>39</sup> symbolizes the effects of Envy and Jealousy upon various characters: Satyrane's "mighty heart did almost rend in tway, / For very gall" when he perceived Triamond's success in the Tournament of the Cestus (F.Q. 4.4.32); Scudamour's heart is filled with "gealous discontent" (F.Q. 4.5.30), and his desire for vengeance "like thornes did pricke his gealous

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38. For the asp's connection with calumny, see Valeriano, lib. 14, s.v. ORIS VIS. Ripa's INGIURIA, has "la lingua fuori della bocca, la quale sara simile a quella del serpe" (p. 230). Cf. the "banefull teeth of injury" (F.Q. 6.12.28).

39. The double heart is a distinguishing attribute of Ripa's FRAUDE (see illustration 23).

hart" (F.Q. 4.5.31).<sup>40</sup> Aemylia is so greatly afflicted with grief that it was "as if the paine / Her tender hart in peeces would divide" (F.Q. 4.7.10). The conflict between different kinds of love is described in heart-rending terms:

Hard is the doubt, and difficult to deeme,  
When all three kinds of love together meet,  
And doe dispart the hart with powe extreme. . .

(F.Q. 4.9.1)

In Book Three, Scudamour's jealous grief at his lady's plight, causes him to groan "as if his hart were peeces made" (F.Q. 3.11.8).

Ate's "matchlesse eares deformed and distort" indicate the practice of Detraction:

For what soever good by any sayd,  
Or doen she heard, she would streightwayes invent,  
How to deprave, or slaunderously upbrayd,  
Or to misconstrue of a mans intent,  
And turne to ill the thing, that well was ment.

(F.Q. 5.12.34)

"Deformed" and "distort" suitably describe Ate's misshapen ears, but also indicate her slanderous activities, as she depraves the sense of what she hears: seeking to "blot . . . with blame" or to "wrest in wicked sort" (F.Q. 5.12.34).

Ate's "unlike" feet generally link her with the unbalanced, hobbling hags of Book Two, Occasion and Impotence, who threaten to undermine psychological stability. Occasion's "foule reproch", and her provoking "outrageous talke" (F.Q. 2.4.5.)

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40. The thorns that prick Scudamour's jealous heart are related to the thorns which surround Ate's dwelling (F.Q. 4.1.20). Malbecco hastens his jealous flight "as treading still on thorne" (F.Q. 3.10.55), while Doubt in the Masque of Cupid "nicely trode, as thornes lay in his way" (F.Q. 3.12.10). The "spinosa tela" which INVIDIA carries in Alciati's Emblem 71 Minois interprets as "the thorny abuse of the envious" (*referendum est ad aculeatam invidorum maledicentiam*) (p. 272). Cf. also the weed of jealousy, F.Q. 2.4.35, and the weeds around Ate's house, F.Q. 4.1.25.

are methods Ate adopts to stir up mischief.

Thus Ate's discordant form comprises threats to individual virtue, and challenges the stability of the state. She works insidiously by stirring up disruptive and incapacitating emotions (envy, jealousy, self-reproach) to destroy peace of mind, and more actively and threateningly she employs propaganda (calumny, libel, rumour and innuendo) to subvert public order, by denigrating what is commonly accepted as good and right.

### iii

While Ate sums up the qualities of many of the evil characters in The Faerie Queene, her subversive activities are further indicated by her remorseless parodying of images of good.

Ate is the enemy of Concord, and the contention between her members is meant to symbolize her efforts to overthrow Concord:

For all her studie was and all her thought,  
How she might overthrow the things that Concord  
wrought.

(F.Q. 4.1.29)

and

. . . all this worlds faire workmanship she tride,  
Unto his last confusion to bring,  
And that great golden chaine quite to divide,  
With which it blessed Concord hath together tide.

(F.Q. 4.1.30.)

This attempt to bring the world to confusion is exemplified in the use to which she puts her hands:



. . . one did reach, the other pusht away,  
 . . . one did make, the other mard againe,  
 And sought to bring all things unto decay.

(F.Q. 4.1.29)

The notion that even one hand of Ate should be associated with creation, even if what is created is going to be immediately destroyed by her spoiling left hand,<sup>41</sup> is puzzling, until we realize that Ate is a parody of the image of Concord in the Temple of Venus.<sup>42</sup>

On either side of her, two young men stood,  
 Both strongly arm'd, as fearing one another;  
 Yet were they brethren both of halfe blood,  
 Begotten by two fathers of one mother,  
 Though of contrarie natures each to other:  
 The one of them hight Love, the other Hate,  
Hate was the elder, Love the younger brother;  
 Yet was the younger stronger in his state  
 Then th'elder, and him maystred still in all debate.

Nathlesse that Dame so well them tempred both,  
 That she them forced hand to joyne in hand,  
 Albe that Hatred was thereto full loth,  
 And turn'd his face away, as he did stand,  
 Unwilling to behold that lovely band.  
 Yet she was of such grace and vertuous might,  
 That her commaundment he could not withstand,  
 But hit his lip for felonous despight,  
 And gnasht his yron tuskes at that displeasing sight.

(F.Q. 4.10.32-33)

Concord, like Ate, has at one hand the principle that reaches forward "hand to joyne in hand", and at the other the principle that pushes away the bond of friendship in "felonous despight"; on the one hand the principle of creation (Love), and on the other, the principle of destruction (Hate). But Concord has

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41. For "the other" hand meaning the left hand, see Upton's note on Occasion's "other" leg in Spenser Variorum, 2.226.

42. H. Clement Notcutt, "The Faerie Queene and its Critics", cited in Spenser Variorum, 4.299 offers a forced contrast between Ate and Concord. For Ate's "travesties of tetradic order", see Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p. 157.

the power to mediate between these contrary tendencies, to join them in "lovely band", while Ate sets the opposing principles at odds with one another. In the image of Concord, Love masters Hatred "in all debate", but Ate is "mother of debate", provoking continual strife and enmity.

The image of Concord at the porch of the Temple of Venus is modelled upon the famous Triad of Fidius (see illustration 22).<sup>43</sup> This antique image formed the basis of Alciati's Emblem FIDEI SYMBOLUM, which depicts Love joining the hands of Honour and Truth.<sup>44</sup> Of particular interest in this triad is the mediating position of Love, who presides over the joined right hands of Truth and Honour, in a way which closely resembles Concord's joining of the hands of Love and Hatred. Alciati's emblem CONCORDIA also uses the symbol of the joined hands. In this emblem two armed warriors, armed even as Love and Hate are armed, conclude peace by joining their right hands. Joined right hands are the symbol of Concord and Alliance, the emblem explains.<sup>45</sup>

In contrast to the image of Concord and its emblematic models, the image of Ate is based on a denial of all the features

43. On the triad of Fidius, see Wind, p. 250 and P.L. Williams, "Two Roman Reliefs in Renaissance Disguise," *JWL*, 4 (1941), 41. Professor Fowler has shown the importance of the Triad of Fidius to the structure of the *Faerie Queene* in *Spenser and the Numbers of Time*, p. 22 and more fully in "Emanations of Glory", pp. 43-82.

44. See Alciati Emblem 9. Other emblematic manifestations of the triad of Fidius are Reusner, *Emblemata*, No. 9, DITAT SERVATA FIDES, and Sambucus, p. 13 VERA AMICITIA. For detailed commentary, see Valeriano, p. 628, s.v. FIDIUS DEUS.

45. Alciati, Emblem 39. Based on Horapollo, *Hieroglyphica*, 2.11.

of Concord: instead of joining hands, the offered hand of Love is "pusht away" and is rejected. If Love presides over the union of Truth in the FIDEI SYMBOLUM, then Hatred is the dominating aspect in the image of Ate. Other aspects of her physical description link her iconographically with Fraud (her double heart, her disguise as beautiful maiden which covers her ugliness),<sup>46</sup> while we are elsewhere explicitly told that she is foe to Honour.<sup>47</sup> In all respects Ate contradicts the triad Love, Honour, and Truth with her own subversive triad of Hate, Dishonour and Fraud infolded in her ugly body.

The full significance of Ate's parody can be seen in terms of the psychological allegory involved in the image of Concord.

. . . it is only by the help of Concord, or as we may put it, through the integration of aggressive and erotic impulses, that Scudamour can enter the Temple of Venus Hermaphroditos.<sup>48</sup>

This "integration of aggressive and erotic impulses" is completely overthrown, when Scudamour confronts Ate. Whereas Scudamour enters the Temple of Venus by the side of Love, Scudamour is now taken over by Hatred, and immediately yields to unbalanced aggression.

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46. See illustration 23. See Ripa, s.v. Fraude.

47. Duessa recognizes that Ate is "most fit to trouble noble knights, / which hunt for honor" (F.Q. 4.1. 19).

48. Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p. 166.



But Scudamour for passing great despight  
 Staid not to answer, scarcely did refraine,  
 But that in all those knights and ladies sight,  
 He for revenge had guiltlesse Glauce slaine:  
 But being past, he thus began amaine;  
 False traitour squire, false squire, of falsest knight,  
 Why doth mine hand from thine avenge abstaine,  
 Whose Lord hath done my love this foule despight?  
 Why do I not it wreake, on thee now in my might?

Discourteous, disloyall Britomart,  
 Untrue to God, and unto man unjust,  
 What vengeance due can equal' thy desert,  
 That hast with shamefull spot of sinfull lust  
 Defil'd the pledge committed to thy trust?  
 Let ugly shame and endlesse infamy  
 Colour thy name with foule reproaches rust.  
 Yet thou false Squire his fault shalt deare aby,  
 And with thy punishment his penance shalt supply.

(F.Q. 4.1. 52-53)

Scudamour's imagination, infected by Ate's deluding lies,<sup>49</sup>  
 transmutes the FIDEI SYMBOLUM into an image of broken faith:  
 Hatred now presides over the emblem, while in his mind Glauce  
 represents the antithesis of Truth (she is now the "false squire,  
 of falsest knight") and Britomart becomes an example of betrayed  
 Honour, deserving "ugly shame, and endless infamy". Scudamour  
 in his desire for revenge is afflicted with the "despight",  
 which characterizes Hatred in the image of Concord. Scudamour,  
 instead of being the knight of love as his shield implies, acts  
 out the role of Hatred.

When Scudamour succeeded in integrating his aggressive  
 and his erotic impulses he passed into the Temple of Venus.  
 But now, having given way to his aggressive impulses, he is

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49. In this psychological allegory depicting Ate as casting doubt  
 and confusion Spenser may be following Homer's allegory of  
 Ate, the daughter of Zeus that "blindeth all" and who  
 "walketh over the heads of men bringing men to harm" in  
Iliad 19.91ff. She is the power of delusion who affects  
 men's minds.

confronted by Ate, whose grotesque physical appearance travesties the henosis presented in the image of Venus Hermaphroditos.<sup>50</sup> The union of two bodies in one flesh, a symbol of matrimonial union, has become in Ate the grafting of two mutually antagonistic bodies onto one another.<sup>51</sup> Not only are these two parts of her body ill-matched and out of all proportion, they continually strive against each other. Where the feet and legs of Venus Hermaphroditos are bound fast together,<sup>52</sup> Ate's feet move in opposite directions:

. . . that when th'one forward yode,  
The other backe retired, and contrarie trod  
(F.Q. 4.1.29).

Ate, then, in her radical contradiction of Spenser's emblem of marital concord would seem to exhibit some kinship with Milton's image of matrimonial error, that evil angel which

. . . either blindly or maliciously hath drawn together in  
two persons ill embarkt in wedlock the sleeping discords  
and enmities in nature . . . that they may wake to  
agony and strife . . . 53

iii

Nevertheless, to regard Ate only as a travesty or parody

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50. F.Q. 4.10.39-42. See my discussion in Chapter Two above. See also Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p. 164, for Venus as a symbol of henosis.

51. Compare Alciati's emblem 197, NUPTA CONTAGIOSO and Whitney, p. 99, IMPAR CONIUGIUM, which depicts the joining of the living and the dead as an image of unequal marriage.

52. F.Q. 4.10.40.

53. Milton, The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, in Selected Prose, p. 146f.

of Venus or Concord is to ignore, however conveniently, the close and disturbing similarity between the images of good and their evil counterparts. "The borderline between them," noted Kathleen Williams, "is very fine."<sup>54</sup> The image of Concord includes the "contrarie natures" (F.Q. 4.10.32) of Love and Hate, even as Ate is characterized by her "contrarie" motion and glances. Even Spenser's Graces, the embodiments of Order, contain in their dance the "forward" and "toward" motion (F.Q. 6.10.24),<sup>55</sup> that characterizes Ate's "contrarie" treading.

Perhaps, then, it might be more accurate to see Ate not as a travesty, but as an essential ingredient of Concord. "Heraclitus," reports Plutarch, "says that when Homer prays that 'Strife may vanish away from the ranks of the gods and of mortals,' he fails to note that he is invoking a curse on the origin of all things, since all things originate from strife and antagonism."<sup>56</sup> Ate is not so much an enemy that must be eliminated, but a principle that has to be included within Spenser's final vision of order.<sup>57</sup> Hatred is present in the

54. Williams, p. 129.

55. For the Graces as representatives of Divine and Natural Order, see Tonkin, p. 233. On the iconography of the Graces and the discordia concors, see Tonkin, pp. 248-263. Wind, pp. 26-35 still offers the best coverage of the iconographical sources of the Graces.

56. Plutarch, Isis and Osiris 370D. Plutarch also discusses the myth of the birth of Concord from the union of Aphrodite and Ares (Isis and Osiris 370C). For the importance of the discordia concors to Renaissance thinking, see Wind, pp. 86ff., 196f., 197n.23, and 270f.

57. The contrasts between Ate and Concord have been noted by H. Clement Neteutt, "The Faerie Queene and its Critics," cited in Spenser Variorum, 4. 298-301, but he sees the contrast as one of opposition only. Ate's case may be paralleled with Mutabilitie's: they both unconsciously affirm the order which they seek to subvert.



image of Concord, and so is debate, of which Ate is the mother.  
 But in the ordering of the cosmos Love, the younger brother, is  
 preeminent:

Yet was the younger stronger in his state  
 Then th' elder, and him maystred still in all debate.

(F.Q. 4.10.32).

## CHAPTER FOUR

The Devices on the Knights' Shields.

No other one characteristic would seem more firmly to endorse Lewis's classification of The Faerie Queene as "a verbalization of Pageant" <sup>1</sup> than the carefully described imprese which adorn the knights' shields in the poem. Exactly this kind of elaborate pageantry characterized the stylized festive tournaments of Elizabeth's reign. <sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, in the description of the festivities which attend the spousals of Florimell and Marinell, Spenser instructively distinguishes his art from the art of the Herald:

To tell the glorie of the feast that day,  
 The goodly service, the devicefull sights,  
 The bridegromes state, the brides most rich aray,  
 The pride of Ladies, and the worth of knights,  
 The royall banquets, and the rare delights  
 Were worke fit for an Herauld, not for me:  
 But for so much as to my lot here lights,  
 That with this present treatise doth agree,  
 True vertue to advance, shall here recounted bee.

(F.Q. 533.3)

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1. Lewis, Spenser's Images of Life, p. 3.
  2. The following studies of Elizabethan tournaments make particular reference to Spenser: Frances A. Yates, "Queen Elizabeth as Astrea," JWI, 10 (1947), 27-82, and "Elizabethan Chivalry: The Romance of the Accession Day Tilts," JWI, 20 (1957), 4-25; Roy Strong, "November's Sacred Seventeenth Day," reprinted in The Cult of Elizabeth (1977), pp. 117-128, and "Fair England's Knights: The Accession Day Tournaments," in The Cult of Elizabeth, pp. 129-162. William Camden, in his Remaines (1629), pp. 184ff. collects a number of Elizabethan imprese. Claude Blair, European Armour (1958), pp. 182f. states that after c. 1450 the shield was used by mounted knights only for heraldic and ceremonial display.

Spenser apparently is prepared to consign merely spectacular pageantry, however "rich" and however "devicefull", to undistinguished occupatio. When he does particularize, he tells us, his description is designed to fulfil a moral purpose: to advance "true vertue". There seems no reason to disagree with this view: the pageantry is above all else moral, and therefore emblematic. Thus the imprese, which Spenser describes in detail in The Faerie Queene, resemble in kind the devices which the more bellicose of Ripa's or Alciati's moral abstractions bear emblazoned upon their shields: Ripa's CASTITA carries a shield of crystal; a wolf's head is painted upon War's scutcheon; Medusa's head is emblazoned upon Reason's arms, to indicate "the victory which Reason gains over the enemies of virtue."<sup>3</sup> Similarly, a number of Alciati's emblems incorporate imprese: Emblem 57, FUROR ET RABIES, shows Agamemnon bearing a shield with a lion painted upon it; Emblem 47, PUDICITIA, simply depicts a shield with the image of a water hen, "Porphyrion".<sup>4</sup> The imprese of Spenser's knights are of this simple moral kind:<sup>5</sup> Arthegall has a crowned ermine upon

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3. Ripa, Nova Iconologia (Padua 1618), p. 73 (CASTITA), p. 232 (GUERRA), p. 437 (RAGIONE). Other instances where personifications bear shields ornamented with devices are: RAPINA (p. 439), FAVORE (p. 175), DIFESA CONTRA PERICOLI (pp. 134-35), ETÀ DEL FERRO (p. 168), PIACERE (p. 412), SOSPITONE (pp. 488-489), STRATAGEMMA MILITARE (pp. 504-505).

4. In addition the following emblems incorporate shields emblazoned with devices: Emblem 19, PRUDENS MAGIS QUAM LOQUAX (the image of an owl emblazoned upon a shield); Emblem 22, CUSTODIENDAS VIRGINES (Minerva accompanied by her Gorgonian shield); Emblem 113, IN STATUAM AMORIS (showing Love and his emblematic shield).

5. As opposed to the more sophisticated imprese illustri, which were elaborated in terms of a number of strictly formulated



his shield (F.Q. 3.2.25); Pyrochles a flaming fire with the word, "Burnt I do burne" (F.Q. 2.4.38); while Satyrane's shield bears the image of a satyr's head (F.Q. 3.7.30).

## ii

Scipione Ammirato called the impresa the "filosofia del cavaliere", <sup>6</sup> thereby raising the device to the intellectual dignity of being a philosophy, even if only the philosophy of a man of active, knightly virtue. Under the veil of motto and picture, the device was meant to declare the "occulto pensiero" of the person who bore it, the inner motivating noble intention, which directed the aristocrat's actions. Claude Paradin traced

rules. Theorists of the impresa contrast the modern device consisting of motto and picture, with the more primitive kind which consisted only of an image, or a motto, and which had a moral meaning: "The Impresa either hath a Word, or is without one; and thus they were of old, of two Sorts, the most ancient wanting Words. But the right Impresa is of Figures and Words, joined . . ." William Drummond of Hawthornden, "A Short Discourse upon Impresa's and Anagrams," in Works (Edinburgh 1711), p. 228. For similar views, see Pierre L'Anglois, Discours des Hieroglyphes Aegyptiens, Emblemes, Devises, et Armoires (Paris 1584), pp. 8-9. Emblems were intended to enunciate a general moral precept, applicable to all, while the impresa was meant to announce a private, personal thought: "Emblems serve for the Demonstration of some general Thing, and for a general Rule, and teaching Precept to everyone, as well for the author and Inventor, as for any other; which is a fault in the an Impresa: For an Impresa is a Demonstration and Manifestation of some notable and excellent Thought of him, that conceived it, and useth it; and it belongs only to him, and is his properly. . ." Drummond, p. 228. For similar views, see, for example, Ercole Tasso, Della realt , e perfettione delle Imprese (Bergamo 1612), p. 13.

6. Ammirato, p. 14.

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e/F

the origin of the device, or, as he called it, the "Symbola Heroica", back to its genesis, when noble kings and potentates of antiquity, driven by the desire to know and love Virtue better, sought to fix in an image the fleeting shades and ideas of Virtue which they had in their minds. Each painted the form, complexion, and nature of his particular Virtue in an image which he called his device. With these images they decorated their shields and armour, those things wherein lay their total hope and safety in battle, delighting in the encouragement that these monuments of virtue would give them.<sup>7</sup>

## iii

The imprese of Spenser's knights fulfil a number of different functions. Frequently they give an insight into the character of the knight who wears them; they reveal, in Ammirato's phrase, the knight's "occulto pensiero". But, since Spenser's knights also represent moral virtues in action, their devices also present emblematic statements of the virtue the knight stands for: they become, as it were, handles by which the reader may grasp the knight's moral meaning. Occasionally, then, these devices act as identifying attributes,<sup>8</sup> the shield acting as a convenient place upon which to hang a symbolic label. By

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7. Claude Paradin, Devises Heroiques (Lyons 1557), pp. 3-6.

8. The allegorical emblem often holds an identifying attribute: frequently when the allegorical emblem is of a martial sort, the identifying attribute is emblazoned on the shield it is provided with.

regarding the knight's device one can distinguish with absolute certainty the moral team for which the hero is playing. Occasionally, the shield figures a statement of the hero's own achieved virtue; while at other times, the shield presents an image of the virtue which inspires and motivates the knight, though he may not in fact have achieved this virtue personally. The distinction, though apparently slender, needs, I think, to be made.

Todd unsympathetically dismissed the descriptions of the decoration on the knights' shields as one of the longueurs of mediaeval romance: "Nothing is more common, I had almost said more tedious and disgusting in the old romances, than descriptions of the impresses on the shields of knights and heroes."<sup>9</sup> One would not wish to answer Todd's condemnation with any of the oversophisticated, exalted arguments of the Renaissance academicians, who considered the device as one of the most profound and intellectually subtle communications of which the human spirit is capable.<sup>10</sup> While not among the most brilliant aspects of Spenser's symbolic art, the devices on the knights' shields are however, worthy of our attention, even if for no other reason than that Spenser himself seemed to take them seriously enough, and to feel

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9. Cited in Spenser Variorum, 2. 230.

10. "... amongst all externall wayes of expressing our conceptions, be it by word, sentence, or gesture; there is one which we call Devise, by meanes whereof the most pregnant wits discover to their like, all the motions of their soule; their hopes, feares, doubts, disdaines, affrights, anger, pleasure and joyes, anguishes and sorrowes, hatred and love, desires and other heart-possessing passions . . ." Henri Estienne, The Art of Making Devises, translated by T.B. [Thomas Blount] (1646), p. 13.



that they made some contribution to the moral design of his poem.

I. Arthegall's Crowned Ermilin.

And on his shield enveloped sevenfold  
He bore a crowned litle Ermilin,  
That deckt the azure field with her faire pouldred skin.  
(F.Q. 3.2.25)

i

It was generally supposed that the ermine had such an aversion from staining the purity of its fur, that it would rather submit to death or capture than sully the whiteness of its skin.<sup>11</sup> Upon a full diet of such unlikely natural history many an emblem book grew fat; the animal was frequently adopted as a suitable symbol for uncompromising purity, whether in faith, honour or chastity. Guido Casoni compared the ermine's behaviour with the actions of the valorous man:

E come l'armelino il suo candore  
Solo per non bruttar la morte elegge;  
Così vuol l'huomo valoroso, e ~~toffe~~ 12  
Morir più tosto, che macchiar la fede.

("As the ermine chooses death in order not to sully its purity, so the man of ~~strength~~ and valour would rather die than stain his faith.").

11 An idea deriving from Pliny, Naturalis historia, VIII. 132. See also Valeriano, lib. 13, s.v. INTAMINATA MUNDITIA, and Tervarent, s.v. Hermine I. Pureté.

12 G. Casoni, Emblemi politici (Venice 1632), Emblem 16, p. 72.

Under the motto, MALO MORI QUAM FOEDARI ("I would rather die than be defiled"), Camerarius depicts the captured ermine as an emblem of uncompromising righteousness even in the face of death:

Omnibus antistat recti mens conscia rebus:  
Hoc bene emi vita tu quoque crede decus. 13

("Superior to all things is a mind that knows the right: believe that this worthy possession is not too dearly acquired even at the expence of one's life.").

ii

When Britomart catches sight of her future husband in Merlin's magic mirror, she sees not only Arthegall's physical appearance, but is granted an insight into his moral nature and motivating ideals. The ermine device forms a symbolic statement of the almost excessive adherence to strict principles of honourable conduct which characterizes Arthegall's actions throughout his quest. Frequently, Arthegall's activities are described in exactly those terms which recall the behaviour of the emblematic ermine: so devoted is he to faith and honour, that he would risk death or capture, in order to avoid any stain or blemish. Thus the knight is captured by Radigund,

. . . sith he his faith had plight,  
Her vassall to become, if she him wonne in fight.

(F.Q. 5.5.23).

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13. J. Camerarius, Symbolorum et emblematum ex animalibus quadrupedibus (Nuremberg 1595), Emblem 81.

He remains faithful to Britomart while in captivity, lest "such blot his honour blemish should" (F.Q. 5.6.2). His oath, "by the faith that I / To Maydenhead and noble knighthood owe" (F.Q. 5.4.34), enshrines the ermine's values of faith, chastity, and honour, and so the greatest and most stinging injury that lying Detraction can hurl at him is that he "his honour blent" (i.e. polluted) (F.Q. 5.12.40). Elsewhere Arthegall refuses to engage with his enemies, even when in great personal danger, because the combat would be dishonourable: thus, when confronted by the enraged, disappointed followers of the Egalitarian Giant, he disdains

. . . his noble hands t'embrew  
In the base blood of such a rascall crew;  
(F.Q. 5.2.52)

and later, when faced by the crowd of Amazons, Arthegall "did shame on womankind / His mighty hand to shend" (F.Q. 5.4.24). The words "embrew" and "shend" both express the fear of defilement, which characterizes the emblematic ermine. Finally, when he condemns Flourdelis, Arthegall enunciates his own values of fidelity and honour:

. . . What foule disgrace is this,  
To so faire Ladie, as ye seeme in sight,  
To blot your beautie, that unblemisht is,  
With so foule blame, as breach of faith once plight,  
Or change of love for any worlds delight?  
Is ought on earth so pretious or deare,  
As prayse and honour? Or is ought so bright  
And beautifull, as glories beames appeare,  
Whose goodly light then Phebus lampe doth shine  
more cleare?  
(F.Q. 5.11.62).

Flourdelis's fault is imaged in the terms that characterize the disgrace that the ermine hates more than death itself: that its



unblemished beauty should be stained or blotted. On the other hand, good is imaged in terms of purity and brightness.

Arthegall's first entrance into the poem, bearing his ermine-decked shield, serves to introduce characteristics of the knight which will be developed later in the narrative.

iii

The ermine device applies not only to Arthegall's personal virtues, but also to his public role as the patron of Justice. Camerarius's use of the ermine as a symbol of righteousness ("recti mens conscia") shows how this may properly come about: for rectitude may involve a strict adherence to the exacting demands of a rigorous personal sense of honour, which when applied socially may be seen as the administration of a code of justice. Arthegall, then, attempts to combine these related personal and public virtues under his ermine impresa.

The ermine-like qualities of the knight affect his selection for and his administration of the virtue of Justice. Astraea chooses the infant Arthegall as her pupil because of his unblemished innocence, because he is "with no crime defilde" (F.Q. 5.1.6). He is trained

. . . equitie to measure out along,  
According to the line of conscience

(F.Q. 5.1.7).

Appropriately in the Collectanea to Valeriano's Hieroglyphica, the ermine is recorded as a hieroglyph of CONSCIENTIA RECTA.<sup>14</sup>

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14. Valeriano, Hieroglyphicorum collectanea (Frankfurt 1614), p.66.

Giovio, the first theorist and collector of imprese, reports that Alfonso I adopted the ermine as his personal device to commemorate his act of clemency after the rebellion led by his brother-in-law. After the rebels had been put down the king pardoned them because he was reluctant to stain his hands with their blood. Just as the ermine would risk death rather than soil its fur, Giovio explains, so the king risked death by not putting the rebels to death, and as a result the king adopted the ermine as his impresa.<sup>15</sup>

This kind of clemency, which depends less on the exercise of true mercy, than on a reluctance to dirty one's hands with guilty blood, is typical of Arthegall's self-righteous refusal to wreak vengeance upon some the evil-doers in the early cantos of Book Five. Thus Arthegall is reluctant to fight with the enraged mob of the giant's followers (F.Q. 5.2.52), and when faced by the troop of Amazons he disdainfully withdraws (F.Q. 5.4.24). Fortunately for him, his iron page, Talus, is not troubled by any such scruples.

## iv

The ermine on Arthegall's shield is an example of Spenser's habit of building "into the imagery of The Faerie Queene, at strategic points, the traditional emblems of the virtue whose

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15. Paolo Giovio, Ragionamento sopra i motti, e disegni d'arme e d'amore (Milan 1863), pp. 17-18. The first edition of this work was (Venice 1556).

legend he was writing." <sup>16</sup> The ermine appropriately makes its appearance here in the Book of Chastity, <sup>17</sup> since it was a traditional attribute of that virtue, its image being depicted upon the banner borne by the chaste in Petrarch's Trionfi. <sup>18</sup> However, it is not Britomart, the patronness of Chastity, who bears the ermine device, but Arthegall. Further, Britomart's impresa, "a Lion passant in a golden field" (F.Q. 3.1.4), would seem more appropriate to the Knight of Justice, <sup>19</sup> than of Chastity. Clearly, Spenser is suggesting some sort of symbiotic relationship between the Virtues of Chastity and Justice, and a mutual dependence of Britomart and Arthegall. <sup>20</sup> Their

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16. A.D.S. Fowler, "Emblems of Temperance in The Faerie Queene," RES, II (1960), 143. I examine this practice with reference to Book Five of The Faerie Queene in Chapter Five of this thesis.
  17. The appearance of the ermine here illustrates another of Spenser's symbolic practices: "At least one corresponding evil image precedes a virtuous image" (Fowler, "Neoplatonic order in The Faerie Queene," p. 71. In Canto One of Book Three Malecasta appears "with a scarlot mantle covered, / That was with gold and Ermines faire enveloped" (E.Q. 3.1.59). Malecasta's clothing identifies her with Alciati's LASCIVIA (Emblem 79).
  18. Petrarch, "Trionfo della Morte," 11.19.21 "la lor vittoriosa insegna / in campo verde un candido ermellino, / ch'oro fino e topazi al collo tegna". Rime e Trionfi, edited by R. Ramat (Milan 1957). See also Ripa (Padua 1618), s.v. Castita.
  19. For the lion as an attribute of Justice, see Valeriano, lib. 1, s.v. IUSTITIAE CULTUS. Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p. 68 discusses the lion as emblem of justice.
  20. Britomart's intervention in Arthegall's quest and the image of Isis (F.Q. 5.7) shows the dependence of Arthegall's justice upon Britomart's clemency.



individual perfections are only finally attained in the relationship of one to the other.

For this reason the ermine that Arthegall bears is crowned, thereby representing a superior form of chastity. When Arthegall and Britomart are reconciled, Glauce explains that "love . . . is the crowne of knighthood" (F.Q. 4.4.31). Enfolded within the dark conceit of the crowned ermine, is the belief that chastity is at its most perfect when it includes love. Only through love (and Arthegall) will Britomart find completion and perfection. In their relationship, each realizes more fully an essential aspect of his or her own nature. 21

## II. Pyrochles, Atin and the "flaming fire".

Behind his backe he bore a brasen shield,  
On which was drawen faire, in colours fit,  
A flaming fire in midst of bloudy field,  
And round about the wreath this word was writ,  
Burnt I do burne . . .

(F.Q. 2.4.38)

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21. In Arthegall's impresa we may have an instance of Spenser's carrying out his avowed intention to fit "present persons" to "antique praises" (F.Q. 3. Proem 3). Camden reports that "the old Earls of Warrick bare Chequy Or, and Azure a Chevron Ermine" and that "the antient earles of Leicester bare Gules a Cinquefole Ermine." (Remaines, p. 157). The image of the ermine was one associated with the Queen: the so called "Ermine Portrait" at Hatfield House depicts an ermine with a crown-collar on the Queen's sleeve. Spenser's Eliza is "Yclad in Scarlot, . . . / And Ermines white" (Shepheardes Calender, April, 56-57, in Minor Poems, edited by E. de Selincourt (Oxford 1910).) Spenser may be insinuating ~~his hopes~~ for the union of his patron, Leicester, with the Queen. However, since the Leicester and Warwick arms do not exactly image Arthegall's ermine, to argue for an identification between Arthegall and Leicester on the basis of this device is dubious.

The shield is borne by Atin, but it belongs to Pyrochles. The impresa is applicable to the Knight and his squire, while their sharing of the one device tells us something of their relationship.

## i

Pyrochles's impresa relates him directly to a personification of the choleric temperament: in Ripa's descriptions of the four physiological complexions (Choleric, Sanguine, Phlegmatic, and Melancholic) the Choleric is distinguished by its association with the element of fire: on the ground beside a sword-brandishing warrior lies a shield emblazoned with a device exactly like that which adorns Pyrochles's shield: "in the middle is painted a great flaming fire (una gran fiamma di fuoco).<sup>22</sup>" The flame, explains Ripa, indicates that the choleric are always quickly aroused to anger (la prontezza di voler combattere).

## ii

Primarily, then, the "flaming fire" indicates Pyrochles's uncontrolled anger. "Wrath is a fire," explains the Palmer (F.Q. 2.4.35), while Furor's angry ragings are described in terms

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22 Ripa (Rome 1603), pp. 74 and 75, s.v. COMISSIONI (sic): COLERICO PER IL FUOCO. Ripa traces the association of the choleric temperament with fire back to Galen. Henry Peacham, following Ripa and with an eye perhaps on Spenser's Pyrochles, assigns CHOLERA, "a shield, / Charg'd with a flame, upon a crimson field," Minerva Britanna (1612), p. 128.

of the burning of "cruell fyre" in the course of Canto Four.<sup>23</sup>  
 Further, this ardent impresa links the knight with the person-  
 ification of Impatience, "arm'd with raging flame" (E.Q. 2.11.23).<sup>24</sup>  
 In fact, the knight's device points to all the perturbations,  
 which afflict him:

Outrageous anger, and woe-working jarre,  
 Direfull impatience, and hart murdring love,  
 (F.Q. 2.5.16)

in short, to all the things which work to overthrow "the goodly  
 peace of stayed mindes" (F.Q. 2.5.1).

The knight's shield makes a considerable impression  
 upon those who view it:

. . . Right well beseemed it,  
 To be the shield of some redoubted knight;  
 (F.Q. 2.4.38).

and the fiery impresa forms a suitable introduction for the  
 knight's own splendid appearance: his arms are so bright that they

. . . round about him threw forth sparkling fire,  
 That seemd him to enflame on every side.  
 (F.Q. 2.5.2).

The knight is strikingly brilliant, "sparkling"; yet, he appears  
 to purchase this impression rather dearly, for within this radiant  
 cloud the knight is "enflamed", burning. Indeed, his motto, "Burnt  
I do burne" (F.Q. 2.4.38), produces a similarly ambiguous affect:  
 at once it promises swift retribution for any injury, a promise  
 to fight fire with fire; while on the other hand it suggests that

23. F.Q. 2.4.6; 2.4.15; 2.4.32; and later at 2.5.20 and 2.6.50.

24. See Pyrochles's "impatient might" (F.Q. 2.5.21).



when attacked the knight will at once be consumed with rage and passion. His own rage and vindictiveness threatens to overthrow him. Whether the motto expresses Pyrochles's eagerness to combat the wrath of others with a vengeance both exact and swift, or whether it expresses Pyrochles's vain efforts to resist and overcome his own choleric temperament, in either case his anger harms him as much as any imagined adversary. The more he seeks to use wrathful and impatient means to combat injury, the more he is inflamed. Once the flame has been applied to him, once "burnt", he will continue to burn. He is caught in a continual fire of suffering and torment, which is only increased by his efforts to overcome it. The image earlier used to express increased grief is exactly applicable to the pain Pyrochles suffers in attempting to suppress the flames of wrath wrathfully:

But double griefs afflict concealing harts,  
As raging flames who striveth to suppress  
(F.Q. 1.2.34).

The "I do burne" of the motto is ironically echoed in Pyrochles's anguished cry, "I burne, I burne, I burne, . . . O how I burne with implacable fire" (F.Q. 2.6.44), as he flounders in the idle lake,<sup>25</sup> after getting the worst of his encounter with Furor.

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25. This event symbolizes the "woe-working jarre" which afflicts Pyrochles. Fire opposed to water was taken as a symbol of discord in Coſonna, Hypnerotomachia, p. 238 f. See also Tervarent, s.v. Fourmi, and Flamme III; and Valeriano, lib. 46, s.v. De Thuribulo et Phiala. Discordia: "Sunt enim qui thuribulum, aut aliquod aliud vas igniarium cum a uario pictum, unde scilicet ignem et aquam inesse perspiceretur, quippe si ex uno ignis promicaret, in altero aqua desideret, discordiae signum se tradant: quod ea naturae sint maxime contrariae" (p. 495). For translation see p. 103A.

p. 103 n. 25:

Translation from Valeriano:

For there are those who give as a symbol of discord, a thurible or some other fire-containing vessell, with a water jug, which can plainly be seen to contain fire and water; obviously, if the fire blazes out of one, in the other the water sinks; because their natures are so greatly opposed.

The incident can be seen as a psychological allegory involving the increased pain which results from violent efforts to restrain and suppress wrath.

Pyrochles's situation may be referred to Georgette de Montenay's emblem, PATERE (see our illustration 27).<sup>26</sup> A fool, armed only with a bellows, attempts to fight with a flaming warrior. Naturally his efforts result only in augmenting the fires of rage. Pyrochles is like the warrior and the fool: like the warrior he burns and rages powerfully; and like the fool who seeks to combat the wrathful adversary with the bellows, his resistance only succeeds in increasing the flaming man's fury and doubling the beating he gets. De Montenay's emblem claims that the fool suffers by attempting to resist actively; but Spenser wisely demonstrates that the warrior himself suffers, by being inflamed the more by continued conflict.

The remedy, de Montenay suggests, is patience. Wrath increases as it is resisted wrathfully. The only way to overcome is to break the chain of vindictive reaction and to "turn the other cheek".<sup>27</sup> Pyrochles, in his burning impatience, is obviously

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26.. Georgette de Montenay, p. 92:

Quand l'homme fol est par ire enflamé  
Et vient à tort faire à son frere outrage,  
Comment seroit le batu estimé,  
De luy bailler à souhait son visage?  
Car ce seroit luy accroistre sa rage  
Comme le feu en le soufflant s'allume.  
Que veut donc Christ de luy en ce passage?  
Qu'en patience à peine on s'accoustume.

27. Matthew 5.39 and Luke 6.29. See also the cautionary maxims *IGNEM IUNI NE ADDAS* and *IGNIS NON EXTINGUITUR IGNI* (Erasmus, *Adagia* (Geneva 1606), 1838 and 1222).



ignorant of this method.<sup>28</sup>

iii

The "hart murdering love," which afflicts Pyrochles is not concupiscence (that side of things is left to his brother, Cymochles),<sup>29</sup> but rather the desire for honour. Pyrochles, Atin reports, is

. . . renowned farre  
For his bold feats and hardy confidence,  
Full oft approv'd in many a cruell warre.

(F.Q. 2.4.41)

and is

Drad for his derring do, and bloody deed;  
For all in bloud and spoile is his delight.

(F.Q. 2.4.42)

Scipione Bargagli records a contemporary impresa depicting flames with the motto, SPLENDET ET ARDET, devised to convey its bearer's devotion to honour.<sup>30</sup> Pyrochles, similarly, both burns and

28. Compare Guyon: "nothing could him to impatience entise" (F.Q. 2.5.21).

29. Both Pyrochles and Cymochles are unstable characters. For Cymochles's association with water and instability, see Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, p. 10n. 2. But Pyrochles is similarly associated with water: his arms "as the Sunny beames do glaunce and glide / Upon the trembling wave, so shined bright" (F.Q. 2.5.2). Cymochles characteristically moves towards Concupiscence, Pyrochles to Irascibility. For the association of water with inconstancy and instability, see Ripa, s.v. Inconstanza (Rome 1603), pp. 225-226.

30. Scipione Bargagli, Dell'Imprese (Venice 1594), p. 186. The impresa is based on the distinction between two kinds of fire: the sublunary which burns, and the heavenly which shines (cf. F.Q. 7.7.26).

shines: his "bright armes" "shined bright" with "sparkling fire", which "seemd him to enflame" (F.Q. 2.5.2). Yet the conditions occasioned by such ferocity are, the narrator wryly observes, quite intolerable:

The smouldring dust did round about him smoke,  
Both horse and man nigh able for to choke.

(F.Q. 2.5.3).

The atmosphere is more smokey, than splendid, and instead of burning, this knight smoulders and smokes. Pyrochles has sacrificed the more honourable and shining aspects of valour to mere "bloud and spoile" (F.Q. 2.4.42). Pyrochles has been prevented by his anger from achieving the fame he so earnestly seeks. His device concentrates only upon the burning aspects of fire, upon the flames of wrath, and ignores the shining qualities of that element in its more glorious manifestation. The wrongs he seeks to avenge in his quest for fame are merely factitious, fabricated by Atin merely to exercise his master's irascible nature. Pyrochles stands upon points of honour, not for honour's sake, but merely to provoke a quarrel: finally he only gets as far as burning with anger; he never rises to the point where he shines with glory.

Pyrochles's impresa shows him to be a knight who is in fact his own worst enemy ("his owne woes authour" (F.Q. 2.5.1)). He is valiant, brave, and honour-seeking, but his skill in arms and his valour are finally turned against himself, and the honour he so earnestly seeks eludes him simply because of his uncontrolled anger. He is a tragic and unfortunate character, rather than a vicious one.

Atin also bears Pyrochles's shield and impresa, but in this context the device functions as an attribute, by which one may identify the abstraction which the squire represents. The flames on the shield correspond to the fire which accompanies the figure of DISCORDIA in Junius's emblem, DISCORDIA EXITIALIS, and in Ripa's personification of that abstraction.<sup>31</sup> The "two darts exceeding flit" (F.Q. 2.4.38) which Atin carries are another attribute of Discord: Horapollo claims that an armed man carrying a dart ("telum") was the Egyptian hieroglyph for TUMULTUS, AUT BELLI PRINCIPIUM.<sup>32</sup>

The fire in the impresa becomes in Atin's hands the fire of discord ("Discordia è un fuoco," says Ripa), with which Atin attempts to inflame those he meets. He himself does not burn like his master Pyrochles; he merely conveys the flame of wrath to others. The darts "of malice and despiht" are the "fiery darts of the wicked" (Ephesians 6.16) against which the Christian must defend himself.<sup>33</sup>

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31. Junius, Emblem 54; Ripa, s.v. Discordia (Rome 1603), p. 104. Giulio Cesare Capaccio, Delle Imprese (Naples 1592) associates the warrior stirring up flames with an emblem of Seditious Men (GLI HUOMINI SEDITIOSI), Lib. 3, p. 59.

32. Horapollo, 2.5; and Valeriano, lib. 42, s.v. Arcus et sagittae, Tumultus.

33. "In Divinis tamen literis per arcum et sagittas ab improbis hominibus paratas, interpretes totum belli apparatus accipiunt," Valeriano, p. 444. For translation see p. 107A.



p.107 n.33:

Translation of Valeriano:

For in divine scripture commentators interpret the bow and arrows borne  
by wicked men as the whole panoply of war.

The identifying attributes of Discord which Atin bears serve in part to confirm Upton's identification of Atin with Ate, the Greek goddess of mischief and strife.<sup>34</sup> But, although there is a connection between the two, Atin is not Ate. Where Spenser's Ate literally embodies the principle of discord in her own foul person,<sup>35</sup> Atin is merely the purveyor of strife, causing Discord in and between others. Atin does not engage in conflict himself, he merely starts it. He bears the flame of Pyrochles's wrath and ambition before him, vaunting his master's name and achievement and preparing battles for him to fight. Atin's sneering, bellicose manner are meant to provoke those he meets, seeking to fabricate situations wherein his master's wrath can be exercised. In his self-professed mission to "stirre [Pyrochles] up to strife and cruell fight" (F.Q. 2.4.42), Atin sows the seeds of discord wherever he goes.

### III. THE SANS BROTHERS: KNIGHTS OF NEGATIVITY.

At last him chaunst to meete upon the way  
A faithlesse Sarazin all arm'd to point,  
In whose great shield was writ with letters gay  
Sans foy.

(F.Q. 1.2.12).

His looke was sterne, and seemed still to threat  
Cruell revenge, which he in hart did hyde,  
And on his shield Sans loy in bloudie lines was dyde.

(F.Q. 1.3.33).

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34. Spenser Variorum, 2. 233.

35. See F.Q. 4.1.27-30 and my discussion in Chapter Three above.

Whereas an errant knight in armes yclod,  
 And heathnish shield, wherein with letters red  
 Was writ Sans joy, they new arrived find:  
 Enflam'd with fury and fiers hardy-hed.

(F.Q. 1.4.38).

The device on the shield borne by Atin acts as a symbolic attribute which serves to identify his allegorical function. But here Spenser has named his characters in such a transparent fashion as to leave one in no doubt as to their moral identity.

But in providing each of the Saracen brothers with a neatly labelled shield Spenser has not just labelled his characters: he has provided each with a motto and device which indicates their respective moral natures and the ideals which motivate them. That their names correspond exactly with their mottos indicates that their characters are completely absorbed in their chosen moral roles: they have no existence beyond their chosen roles of faithlessness, lawlessness and joylessness. Their devotion to such negative endeavours assigns them automatically to a completely pallid sphere of existence. They inhabit a world which consists only of denial. In their cases the absence of any kind of figure in their imprese is in itself a kind of figure, completely applicable to these knights of negativity. The wit of this non-device can be referred to contemporary examples of tournament imprese: the Earl of Essex chose to express his grief by a black mourning shield with the motto, PAR NULLA FIGURA DOLORI; while an anonymous knight chose to express his lack of care by a blank shield inscribed simply NEC CURA, NEC CHARACTER. <sup>36</sup> The lack of

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36. Camden, Remaines (1629), pp. 184 and 186. For Essex's black mourning shield, see also Peacham, Minerva Britannia, p. 114.



a figure in the imprese expresses the negativeness of these pagan knights' existence and the resulting grief that must flow from it.

#### IV. The "Impresa" as Rebus.

No other devices repeat the names of characters so obviously as those of the Saracen brothers. However, a number of the imprese in the poem punningly play upon the name of the character who bears them. This should not, of course, surprise us, since there ought to be a close relationship between the knight and his symbol: as Ammirato claimed, "l'impresa sta in vece dell' huomo" (the device stands in place of the man).<sup>37</sup>

Thus Scudamour takes his name from and is easily recognized by his device:

A little off, his shield was rudely throwne,  
On which the winged boy in colours cleare  
Depeincted was, full easie to be knowne,  
And he thereby, where ever it in field was showne.

(F.Q. 3.11.7).

In the House of Busyrane the statue of Cupid repeats this device and spells out the implications of Scudamour's aggressive, masculine sexuality.<sup>38</sup> St. George is referred to constantly in terms of the badge he wears, his "bloudie Crosse", and becomes throughout the poem simply "the Redcrosse Knight". Further, if we may credit

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37. Ammirato, p. 9.

38. Discussed more fully in Chapter Two above.

Clarence Steinberg's suggestion that Atin is derived from the Irish word "aithinne", meaning firebrand,<sup>39</sup> then the "flaming fire" which the youth bears on Pyrochles's behalf becomes a witty play on the page's own name. Though the name and the device are not identical, Satyrane's impresa, the satyr's head, certainly glances at its bearer's name. The similarity of name and impresa exemplifies how closely the identity of the knight is bound up with and absorbed by his moral nature.

## 1

Satyrane.

He was all armd in rugged steele unfilde,  
As in the smoky forge it was compilde,  
And in his Scutchin bore a Satyres hed.

(F.Q. 3.7.30).

This impresa indicates that Satyrane is descended from the satyrs,<sup>40</sup> for the shield is, in fact, a "Scutchin". Yet, the satyr's head indicates that the knight has in fact overcome the libidinous nature of his forebears. A head upon the shield is a hieroglyphic, according to Capaccio, of "cosa di guadagno", of something gained or overcome.<sup>41</sup> Thus the satyr's head indicates that Satyrane has in fact conquered the libidinous tendencies of the old satyr within him. He is, after all, a Christian knight, who has learnt Una's "discipline of faith and veritie" (F.Q. 1.6.31),

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39. Clarence Steinberg, "Atin, Pyrochles, Cymochles: on Irish Emblems in The Faerie Queene," Neuphilologische Mitteilungen, 72 (1971).

40. See F.Q. 1.6.21-23.

41. Capaccio, p. lib. 1, p. 6<sup>v</sup>.

and has cast off the old Adam of sin. At the same time, he does maintain his connection with the satyr, restraining and controlling his wildness and natural vigour rather than extirpating it completely. His armour is still "rugged" and "unfilde".

## ii

Like the "Symbola Heroica" that ancient warriors placed on their shields for the help and encouragement that these images would provide in battle, the imprese of Guyon and of the Redcross Knight enshrine images of the virtue which inspires them and in which they put their trust, but which they are not presumptuous enough to claim as their own. They bear these imprese as declarations of the virtue of another, rather than as proclamations of their own abilities.

THE Redcross Knight

A Gentle Knight was pricking on the plaine,  
Y cladd in mightie armes and silver shielde. . .  
But on his brest a bloudie Crosse he bore,  
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,  
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,  
And dead as living ever him ador'd:  
Upon his shield the like was also scor'd,  
For soveraine hope, which in his helpe he had.

(F.Q. 1.1.1-2).

Redcross is completely dependent upon his faith in Christ's cross, the symbol of his salvation. On the "silver shielde" is engraved not the sign of his own achievement, but the symbol of Christ's winning of salvation for mankind. A silver shield, it must be



remembered, was given to an untried warrior as a sign that he had not yet achieved any action of moment.<sup>42</sup> It was an incentive to the new knight to achieve some noble exploit which might in future be engraved upon his shield. The Redcross Knight rides out on his quest with only his faith in Christ to boast of. It is not through his own strength that he succeeds, or through his own achievements, but solely through his faith.

Guyon.

Sir knight, mote I of you this curt'sie read,  
To weete why on your shield so goodly scord  
Beare ye the picture of that Ladies head?

(F.Q. 2.9.2).

Arthur's question might well be asked by any reader of the poem. The maiden's head is a punning allusion to the Order of the Maidenhead to which the knight belongs, and this maiden's head is a portrait of the Faerie Queen herself. As Guyon explains:

She is the mighty Queene of Faerie,  
Whose faire retrait I in my shield do beare;  
She is the flowre of grace and chastitie,  
Throughout the world renowned far and neare,  
My liefe, my liege, my Soveraigne, my deare,  
Whose glory shineth as the morning starre,  
And with her light the earth enlumines cleare.

(F.Q. 2.9.4).

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42. <sup>/ #</sup> "Es enfin fut la coutume de graver et de peindre es boucliers et targes, les beaux faits et actes de vertu. Et ceux qui n'avoient encores fait en guerre acte memorable, se servoient d'un bouclier blanc," Pierre L'Anglois, p. 7. See also E. Bolton, The Elements of Armories (1610), pp. 160 and 163; and R. Holme, A Storehouse of Armory and Blazon (Chester 1688), p. 118<sup>18</sup>

Guyon's impresa is a secular equivalent to the Redcross Knight's. As the Patron of Holiness's device tells of his devotion to his spiritual Lord, Guyon's tells of his allegiance to his temporal sovereign and to her imperial power. However, both St. George's religious faith and Guyon's political devotion to the "heavenly Mayd" (F.Q. 2.1.28) are completely at one on a political and moral level: for both ideals meet in the person of the Faerie Queen, Elizabeth. The "heavenly Mayd" is, of course, Virgo-Astraea, whose historical reality in the virgin Queen, Elizabeth, is shadowed forth in the portrait on Guyon's shield. As Frances A. Yates has so convincingly argued, the imperial symbolism of the Elizabeth-Astraea cult viewed Elizabeth primarily as a guardian of the protestant religion, as well as the "patronness of peace," and "the restorer of virtue."<sup>43</sup> The two imprese are thus devoted to similar ends on the political level, Guyon supporting and consolidating the victory won by Red Crosse.

But as Spenser himself notes in the Letter to Raleigh the Faerie Queene signifies "glory in my generall intention". So the head of the Faerie Queene which Guyon bears as his impresa may be seen as a symbol of the glory both Guyon and Prince Arthur seek. This glory is once again the secular equivalent of Red Crosse's salvation and sainthood, symbolized in his impresa of the "bloudy crosse". In neither case does the impresa signify a virtue actually possessed by the knight who bears the impresa, but an aspiration towards the virtue which another possesses, in the

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<sup>43</sup> . Frances A. Yates, "Queen Elizabeth as Astraea," JWI, 10 (1947), 57.

one case Christ in the other case the Faerie Queene, Elizabeth-Gloriana.

iii

Several instances occur in the poem where a knight temporarily adopts the shield and impresa of another knight. This acquisition of an opponent's impresa signals the adoption of some alien ideal or the desire to possess the heroic quality imaged in the coveted impresa. Red Crosse's winning of the shield of the pagan Sansfoy signals his own gradual adoption of the qualities of faithlessness symbolized in that knight's device. His victory over the unholy knight's ideals is only temporary, soon he finds himself defending the shield of faithlessness. Pyrochles's theft of Guyon's shield (F.Q. 2.8.17) is in keeping with that knight's love and desire of glory and honour, symbolized by Guyon's impresa.

But one of the most interesting cases of this kind is to be found in Arthegall's borrowing of Braggadochio's shield at the tournament in honour of the spousals of Florimell and Marinell (F.Q. 5.3). Perhaps Braggadochio's original intention in adopting "the Sunne brode blazed in a golden field" (F.Q. 5.3.14) as his impresa was to imitate, however crudely, the "sunshiny shield" (F.Q. 1.8.20) of Arthur or the sun-broad or sun-bright shields of the other heroes in the poem. But in this guise Braggadochio appears as a Phaeton rather than as the true Apollo. When Arthegall briefly borrows the shield the impresa upon it signifies its new owner's function with complete appropriateness. The sun on the shield is



the "Sol Justitiae", <sup>47</sup> an attribute which identifies Arthegall immediately as the knight of Justice. The impresa looks forward to Arthegall's later identification with Osiris who "signifies the sun" (5.7.4.8). Even when he is disguised Arthegall cannot here conceal his function as the knight of Justice, the borrowed shield serving rather to identify him than to conceal his identity. Yet even here, is there not a sneaking implication that Arthegall can be at times a little like Braggadochio?

#### IV. Literary and Historical Devices.

In providing his knights with these ornamented shields, Spenser is not reflecting the contemporary conditions of knightly warfare. The shield had been considered obsolete in mounted combat for nearly one hundred and fifty years when Spenser wrote. <sup>48.</sup> Rather he is being deliberately antique and literary in his choice of armour. He models the battle dress of his knights upon that of the heroes of classical epic and of mediaeval romance, and on the contemporary theatricality of the pageant. In this respect Spenser may be compared with Ariosto, who similarly arms his knights in antique armour and provides them with shields ornamented with imprese. <sup>49.</sup>

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47. For the Sol Justitiae, see Fowler, Spenser and the Numbers of Time, pp. 66-73. See Chapter Five below for the sun as an emblem of Justice.

48. Blair, pp. 182f.

49. The theorists of the impresa never tired of citing as precedents the so called imprese borne by the warriors of antiquity: "Au voyage de Thebes Amphiacus portoit un Hydre, Polynice un

However it was not merely a nostalgia for the martial glories of the past that prompted Spenser to adopt this antique and literary guise for his knights. In equipping some of his knights with the arms and imprese of the heroes of the past Spenser establishes a firm symbolic link between the character in his poem and the warrior of the past. Red Crosse's shield with its "cross Gules upon a field Argent" obviously links him with the traditional figure of St. George. Such a crest is known as St. George's arms, and was worn by that Knight. But Red Crosse is also linked and identified with the English people by this device. As Hardyng reports in his Chronicle,

These armes were used through all Britain  
For a common signe eche manne to know his nacioun  
From enemies.

In addition, Red Crosse is also linked with the Christian warrior who fights in the panoply of Christ, by the evocation of this

impresa.<sup>50</sup> A number of contexts both literary and historical are immediately evoked by the coat of arms of this knight.

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Sphynge. Agamemnon dans Homere avoit en son escu une Gorgone espouvantable, Ulysse un Dauphin, Hippomedon un Typhon jettant par la bouche une espasse fumee. . . Et quand Virgile parle de ceux qui vinrent au secours de Turnus descrit a part les armes Cimiers et Tymbres d'un chacun quasi en particulier." (L'Anglois, pp. 6-7). For similar lists see A. Fraunce, Insignium, Armorum, Emblematum, Hieroglyphicorum, et Symbolorum . . . explicatio (1588), sigs. A3<sup>v</sup> - C2<sup>v</sup>; E. Tasso, pp. 15-7.

50.. "This panoply has been worn by every Christian man in every age," Upton (Spenser Variorum 1.176).

Arthegall, we are told, appears in ancient armour in Britomart's vision in the magic mirror of her future husband:

And all his armour seem'd of antique mould,  
But wondrous massie and assured sound,  
And round about yfretted all with gold,  
In which there written was with cyphers old,  
Achilles armes, which Arthegall did win.

(F.Q. 3.2.25).

Spenser could not better have signalled his antiquarian and literary bias towards imprese than in arming Arthegall with the arms of Achilles. These arms, forged by Vulcan for the ancient Greek hero, were almost universally cited by the theorists of the impresa (including, interestingly enough, Spenser's compatriot Abraham Fraunce) as an example of the ancient dignity of the device.<sup>51</sup>

It has been suggested that in endowing Arthegall with the arms of Achilles Spenser also endows Arthegall with the dominant character traits of the greatest warrior of the ancient Greeks: his strength and valour as well as his pride, wrath and effeminacy.<sup>52</sup> Spenser's explicit modelling of a number of the events in Arthegall's career on the exploits of Achilles certainly tends to support this point of view.<sup>53</sup> But it could not be said at all truthfully that Arthegall is a mere "carbon copy" of the Greek original.

51. Fraunce, sigs. A<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup> - B<sub>4</sub><sup>r</sup>.

52. Roche, p. 185; H.G. Lotspeich, Classical Mythology in the Poetry of Edmund Spenser (Princeton, N.J. 1932), p. 31; Williams, pp. 133 and 157.

53. Achilles's education by Chiron is similar to Arthegall's education by Astrea; Arthegall's being dressed as a woman by Radigund may owe something to Achilles' disguise as a woman. See Lotspeich, p. 31; R.N. Ringler, "Spenser and the Achilleid", SP, 60 (1963), 182.



Arthegall's wearing the armour of Achilles invokes a literary and historical context in which to place and to judge the newly-introduced hero. Despite the broad similarities between the two heroes, there are also differences.

Spenser in awarding the arms of Achilles to Arthegall is invoking the old story of the contention for the arms of Achilles. Ajax and Ulysses fiercely disputed which of them was the fit successor of the greatest of the Greeks and so the heir of the hero's armour. <sup>54</sup> Ajax claimed that the arms were his because of his martial deeds, Ulysses that they were his because of his political cunning. The council of the Greeks were so impressed by Ulysses' eloquence that they awarded the arms to him, and so judged that cunning was of more worth than valour. Ajax, unable to bear his grief at his failure to gain the arms of his beloved Achilles, killed himself.

The theme of the award of the arms of Achilles forms the subject of several emblems. Alciati's Emblem 48, IN VICTORIAM DOLO PARTAM (On victory gained by cunning), depicts Virtue seated upon Ajax' tomb lamenting the travesty of justice which lead to the arms being awarded to Ulysses rather than to Ajax:

Aiacis tumulus lacrymis ego perluo virtus,  
Heu misera albentes dilacerata comas.  
Scilicet hoc restabat adhuc, ut iudice Graeco  
Vinceret: et causa stat potiore dolus. <sup>55</sup>

Justice was perverted, in Virtue's estimation, when the council of

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<sup>54</sup>. Ovid, Metamorphoses, 13.1-398.

<sup>55</sup>. Alciati, Emblem 48. Derived from The Greek Anthology 7.145. See also Whitney, p. 30.

the Greeks awarded the arms of Achilles to Ulysses, for in so doing they valued guile more than valour. In his final arbitration of this cause celebre in awarding the arms of Achilles to Arthegall Spenser implies that the interests of both Justice and Virtue are equally well served. Arthegall combines both the wiliness of Ulysses and the valour of Ajax. He accomplishes his quest not only through strength but also through guile and cunning. <sup>56</sup>

The virtues of both Ajax and Ulysses receive equal recognition in the person of Arthegall. In awarding the arms to him neither of the ancient warriors is slighted nor is any injury done to the interests of Virtue or Justice.

That Justice is fulfilled in the eventual award of the arms to Arthegall may be seen in another Alciati emblem, TANDEM TANDEM JUSTITIA OBTINET. (Emblem 28). While Ulysses was awarded the arms of Achilles by the council of the Greeks, the gods took it into their hands to correct this injustice. While on his return voyage to Ithaca Ulysses suffered shipwreck and lost the arms. Neptune washed ashore these arms by the tomb of Ajax.

Aeacidae Hectoreo perfusum sanguine scutum,  
 Quod Graecorum Ithaco concio iniqua dedit,  
 Iustior arripuit Neptunus in aequora iactum  
 Naufragio, ut dominum posset adire suum:  
 Littoreo Aiaceis tumulo namque intulit unda,  
 Quae boat, et tali voce sepulchra ferit:  
 Vicisti Telamoniade, tu dignior armis.  
 Affectus fas est cedere iustitiae. <sup>57</sup>

As the demands of Justice were finally fulfilled in the delivery of the arms of Achilles to the tomb of Ajax, so, it may be implied,

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56. An aspect of Arthegall's administration of Justice discussed by C.E. Mounts, "Virtuous Duplicity in The Faerie Queene", MLQ, 7 (1946), 43-52.

poems we now have as 57. Alciati, Emblem 28. From The Greek Anthology 9.115 and 116. For translation see p.120A.

p. 120:

Translation from Alciati:

The more righteous Neptune seized Achilles' shield, stained with Hector's blood, when it was cast into the sea by shipwreck, so that it might reach its rightful owner; for the unjust council of the Greeks had awarded it to the Ithacan. The wave bore it to the tomb of Ajax on the shore, and bellowed these words to the sepulchre: You have conquered, son of Telamon, you, more worthy of the arms. It is right for feelings to yield to justice.



the eventual delivery of these arms to Arthegall is also a fulfilment of the slow but exact operation of Justice set out in the motto "Tandem tandem iustitia obtinet".

It is, of course, entirely appropriate that the Knight of Justice should wear arms that have been delivered by the operation of Justice. In fact, the maxim drawn out of the affair of the contention for the arms of Achilles, "Affectus fas est cedere iustitiae", with which Alciati ends this emblem, might well be seen as an important aspect of Arthegall's administration of Justice, a lesson which, once learnt, he follows with implacable rigour.

The subjects which Vulcan worked upon the arms of Achilles are completely appropriate to the Knight of Justice.<sup>58</sup> Homer's description of the shield is too long to quote in full, but Sandys' abridged description with his digest of the mystical interpretation the figures on the shield received at the hands of the Neoplatonic commentators will suffice for our purposes:

To conclude, it [the shield] contained the whole world, expressed by the orbicular forme of the shield; the foure metals whereof it was made the foure Elements. . . The three incircling rayes defiguring the Zodiack. . . How ever this may be carpt at, as the meere conjecture of Eustathius, yet the figures in the shields informe the minde and erect it to no mean contemplations. For here Vulcan had formed the variety of the starres; the arts and employments both of peace and warre; and whatever conduceth to a perfect government. Neither commends he unto us a slothfull and unactive Philosophy: but that which for knowledge and execution might comply with so great a spirit as Achilles.<sup>59</sup>

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58 . For the descriptions of the figures worked upon the shield of Achilles see Homer, I Iliad 18. 556ff and Ovid, Metamorphoses 13. 291-294.

59 . G. Sandys, Ovid's Metamorphoses Englished Mythologiz'd (1640), p. 225f.

## CHAPTER FIVE.

EMBLEMS OF THE TITULAR VIRTUE IN THE LEGEND OF JUSTICE.

I have already referred to Spenser's practice of building into "the imagery of The Faerie Queene, at strategic points, the traditional emblems of the virtue he was writing":<sup>1</sup> the clasped hands that recur in the Legend of Friendship, and the emblazoned ermine in the Book of Chastity have already been noticed.<sup>2</sup> One might attribute these things to the author's finesse, as he subtly reminds his reader of the book's virtuous subject. However, Professor Alastair Fowler's study of the Legend of Temperance has shown that traditional representations of the titular virtue play a much larger part in the structuring and ordering of the narrative than had hitherto been suspected. There the pouring of water into wine and Temperance's emblematic jugs establish the moral direction of events in the whole book.<sup>3</sup>

When we turn to Book Five of The Faerie Queene we find that Spenser's technique is at once consistent and varied.<sup>4</sup> Again Spenser is referring his reader to traditional emblematic models of Justice. But, instead of referring his narrative back

1. A.D.S. Fowler, "Emblems of Temperance in the Faerie Queene II," 143. See above pp. 98f.
2. See above, pp. 98f. and 29 n. 30.
3. See Fowler, "Emblems of Temperance," 143-149.
4. That is, consistent in so far as he conceals allusions to symbols associated with the titular virtue in the narrative; varied in that his method in this book is different. Even the Hercules and Omphale parallel with Arthegall's capture by Radigand conceals an allusion to an emblem of Justice: Cousteau's Le Senat d'Heliogabale (Pierre Cousteau, Le Pegme (Lyons 1560), p. 16), which warns against the interference of judges' wives in judicial decisions.

to the same basic symbolic matrices of the titular virtue, he inserts into the book's early cantos a number of different emblems of Justice, almost as if to establish his hero's legal credentials.

### I - The Headless Lady and the Knight with the Broken Sword

#### i

It has frequently been noticed that Arthegall cunningly resolves his initial judicial problem according to the precedent set by Solomon in I Kings 3. Faced with two men claiming to be the lover of the same lady, Arthegall, like Solomon before him when confronted by two women each swearing that she is the child's rightful mother, threatens to resolve the argument by offering to cut the disputed property in half and to apportion equal shares to both claimants. The true lover of the lady, like the proper mother in the judgement of Solomon, dissents, preferring to give up the claim rather than assent to the death of the beloved. Dissent reveals true love, and the righteous judge can now confidently award the whole lady (or, in Solomon's case, child) to the right party.

It has been usual to see this episode as a justification of Arthegall's legal credentials, as it places him within a tradition of judicial cunning which extends back to Solomon, the exemplary king and judge of the Old Testament.<sup>5</sup> Surprisingly

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5. See Nelson, p. 265; Williams, p. 160; Aptekar, pp. 23 and 122.



few critics have commented upon Spenser's changes in the circumstances of the Biblical narrative. While the parallel is clearly beyond dispute, to restrict one's comment upon the incident to Jortin's superior "Copied from Solomon's judgment,"<sup>6</sup> is to ignore a good deal of what is happening in the episode.

Arthegall is faced with a much more complicated judicial decision than Solomon. Finally there is little to distinguish the two petitioning harlots of the Biblical story except the strength of their maternal love. By making the claimants in his story a knight and a squire, Spenser introduces a social distinction between the petitioners, and the theft of the lady (unlike the theft of the child in the Biblical narrative) becomes a matter of social oppression, the operation of "lawless might" (*F.Q.* 5.1.17). Arthegall's decision is further complicated by the squire's reluctance to press his case against his social superior. While the squire is suspicious of the whole judicial process, the knight readily accepts any solution the knight of justice proposes, at least until he is found guilty.

The nature of the crime which leads to the judicial inquiry has also been changed. Whereas the harlot killed her child by accident and removed the living child from her companion, the knight removed the squire's lady, and then killed his own lady in a fit of anger. By transforming the object of contention from the babe of the Biblical narrative into a lady, Spenser is led into a narrative absurdity, as Craik noticed: it would have

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6. J. Jortin, "Remarks on Spenser," in *Tracts, Philological Critical and Miscellaneous*, 2 vols (London 1790), Vol. 2, 202.

been far simpler to ask the lady which of the men was her lover than to offer to cut off her head.<sup>7</sup> Of course Solomon could hardly have expected to get very far if he had tried this with the baby. But in changing the babe into a lady, Spenser also changes the impulse which leads to the right resolution of the episode from the maternal love of the Biblical story to sexual love.

In making these changes to the Biblical narrative it could hardly have been Spenser's intention to obscure his borrowings, since the parallel between Solomon's judgment and Arthegall's is transparently obvious. The Biblical story concerns important issues of judicial principle (issues far more important than that cunning is necessary in order for the judge to find out the truth). Spenser's parallel with the Biblical narrative is designed to emphasize the common concerns of both stories.

Immediately before the description of the judgment of Solomon, the king had prayed for "an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad" (I Kings 3.9). The story of Solomon's judgment illustrates his acquisition of an "understanding heart". Like Solomon, Arthegall in discerning between the guilty and the innocent in his judgment steps outside the conventional judicial process (in his case, of trial by ordeal or by combat),<sup>8</sup> and relies upon his own understanding of human nature to decide the case. Arthegall's "sleight", his offer to divide the dead and living ladies equally between both claimants, is cunningly designed to relate his inner perception of truth, based upon his understanding of human nature, to the outward and

7. G.L. Craik, Spenser and His Poetry, 3 vols (1845), Vol. 2, 183.

8. See F.Q. 5.1.25.

public revelation of truth.

But Artegall by signes perceiving plaine,  
That he it was not, which that Lady kild,  
But that strange Knight, the fairer love to gaine,  
Did cast about by sleight the truth thereout to straine.

(F.Q. 5.1.24).

The Geneva gloss to I Kings 3.24 illuminates the principle behind Solomon's apparently inhumane offer to divide the baby, and perceptively comments upon the behaviour of the evil harlot.

"Except God give Judges understanding," the gloss says, "the impudency of the trespasser shall overthrow the just cause of the innocent."<sup>9</sup> Both Solomon's and Arthegall's stratagems are designed to circumvent the impudence of the wicked, which rests its case on pure denial of guilt. While no motive is given to the evil harlot in the Biblical text itself, Spenser shows in the knight's indignation the impudence which seeks to deny the right to the innocent, while brazenly maintaining his own guiltless non-involvement: He

with sterne countenance and indignant pride  
Did aunswere, that of all he guiltlesse stood,  
And his accuser thereuppon defide.

(F.Q. 5.1.23)

The world in which Arthegall operates is one where guilt masquerades as innocence, and innocence often seems like guilt. Arthegall's task is to penetrate beneath the superficial appearance of things to the essential truth of the matter, before delivering

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9. The Bible (Geneva version) (1599).



his judgments. He must not be swayed by the social position of the claimants, nor by circumstantial evidence of apparent guilt (the squire standing by the headless body, for example), nor by overt protestations of innocence. He must be guided not by excessive legalism, but by right understanding of human nature. Above all, he must be aware of the limitations of the judicial process. The Geneva gloss comments upon the mother's resignation of her claim to her child "she had rather indure the rigour of the law, than see her child cruelly slain".<sup>10</sup> Finally, human feeling is stronger than the processes of the law.

## ii

The changes Spenser makes to the story of the judgment of Solomon allude specifically to two emblems of justice, which emphasize and comment upon the judicial predicament which confronts both Solomon and Arthegall as they endeavour to discover the truth of the situations with which they are faced.

The image of the headless lady with which Arthegall is faced at the outset of his quest is in fact an ancient hieroglyph of justice. Diodorus Siculus reports that in Egypt near the Gates of Truth is placed a statue of a headless woman which represents justice. (see my illustration 28).<sup>11</sup> Both Gyraldi and Cartari

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10. Ibid.

11. Diodorus Siculus, Bibliotheca Historica, translated by C.H. Oldfather, Vol. 1 (New York and London 1938), 1.96.9.

in their compendia of pagan gods and goddesses report that the Egyptians represented justice without a head, but neither advances any reason why she should be depicted in this way.<sup>12</sup> However, Curio, in the first book of his additions to Valeriano's Hieroglyphica, while following Gyraldi's description of the Egyptian representation of headless justice verbatim, does give an explanation of the meaning of this hieroglyph. Curio interprets this image of headless justice as a symbol of the necessary impartiality of justice: in making his decision the judge should not be influenced by anybody.<sup>13</sup> Curio further explains, "in Athens in the Areopagus, the accused were ordered to give their defence with their heads veiled, lest they should move the emotions of the judges: therefore her (i.e. justice's) head is placed among the stars, contemplating God alone, and cannot on that account be seen by us. Further the judge's verdict should be concealed up till the very last moment, according to the maxim, it is hidden, so fraud cannot contaminate it."<sup>14</sup>

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12. L.G. Gyraldi, De Deis Gentium (Lyons 1565), p.30; Vincenzo Cartari, Imagini delli Dei de gl'antichi (Venice 1647), p. 242.
  13. C.A. Curio's two books of additions to Valeriano first appeared in the Basle 1567 edn. of Valeriano's Hieroglyphica.
  14. 'Caput vero ei non tam ademisse mihi videntur, quam inter sidera occultasse, ut indicarent a iudice neminem videri debere: unde Athenis in Areopago, rei velato capite caussam dicere iubebantur, ne iudicum affectus movere possent: condit ergo caput inter sidera, solum Deum intuens, et ideo a nobis cerni non potest: debet enim iudicis mens ad extremum usque, donec sententia sit lata, occulta esse, ne qua fraus strui possit.' Eruditissimi viri hieroglyphicorum commentariorum liber prior, in Valeriano, Hieroglyphica (Lyons 1602), p. 635. In the more modern iconography of Justice, similar ideas are indicated by the blindfolding of Justice. To the Renaissance iconographer, however, the blindfold was more

p. 128 n. 14:

Translation of Valeriano:

They seem not so much to have left out the head, as to have concealed it among the stars, in order to show that no one should be seen by the judge: for the same reason, defendants were ordered to plead their case with their heads covered to the Athenians in the Areopagus, lest they were able to move the emotions of the judges: therefore she hides her head among the stars fearing God alone, and so cannot be seen by us: for the judge's decision should be hidden up till the last moment, according to the maxim, lest fraud should corrupt it.



Precisely how Spenser employs this hieroglyph of justice in this episode will be examined later in the chapter.

iii

Spenser alludes to a further emblem in his description of this incident. Valeriano describes an emblematic tableau of justice, which consists of justice dragging behind her two captive women: one carries in her hand a broken sword, the other rests upon a staff. The two women represent two extreme attitudes to the legal process, which justice must avoid: the woman with the broken sword represents an excessive rigour or severity of justice, which suggests a lack of restraint; the woman leaning on the staff represents a dilatory justice, whose conscience is not awakened by any crime, however atrocious, unmoved by any injustice either public or private.<sup>15</sup> Justice must avoid excessive rigour and severity, but should not be driven to the other extreme of indifference and sloth; it must similarly avoid an excessive tolerance of evil, while not indulging in the other extreme of rigorous severity. From these two extremes justice should construct a virtuous compromise.

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likely to indicate lack of discrimination than impartiality. For translation of Valeriano, see p.128A.

15. 'Sedenim species haec duas secum mulieres captivas trahit, unam quae fractum ensem manu praetendit, alteram quae conto innititur, duo ex hoc figmento vitia domita indicantes, ut ex utriusque medio virtutem ipsam adstruerent, per fractum scilicet ensem severitatem nimiam retusam cohibitamve intelligentes: per contum, lentitudinem ad ferulam revocatam, qua iudicia plus aequo producebantur. Unde enim contatio, quae retardationem significat. Lenti vero sunt, qui nullo atroci quantumlibet scelere concitantur, neque publicis neque privatis injuriis commoventur.' Valeriano, Hieroglyphica lib. 42, p. 453.

The knight with the broken sword emblazoned upon his shield bears more than a passing resemblance to the captive female with the broken sword in Valeriano's tableau of justice. While Spenser's Squire in this episode is not exactly leaning upon a staff like the other captured lady in the emblem, nevertheless Spenser indicates his reluctance and diffidence about proceeding with the inquiry, which relates him closely to the alternative extreme of dilatory justice in the emblem. Further, by clothing the Squire in "squalid weed" (5.1.12.7), Spenser depicts a similar neglect and sloth which Valeriano signifies by the iconographic detail of the woman leaning on a staff. "Squalid", according to the OED means "foul through neglect".<sup>16</sup> As his clothes testify to one kind of neglect, so his subsequent actions show reluctance to proceed with the course of justice. Arthegall, as the Knight of Justice, appears in the course of the episode to be attracted first to one extreme and then to the other, before successfully combining his "zeal for vengeance" with his apparent reluctance to proceed with established legal practices: trial by ordeal or combat.

## iv

These sets of allusions indicate that Arthegall's first adventure concerns the discovery of truth and that in his investigation Arthegall must avoid the temptation towards an easy solution, which is offered to two extremes of behaviour: one the impulse towards an over-zealous, hasty vindictiveness, the other

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16.. OED, s.v. 'Squalid' 2a.

the temptation to succumb beneath the difficulties presented by the case - of finding the wrong-doer, of proving his guilt - and so to lapse into a slothful tolerance, which is content to overlook the offence and to propose a compromise solution.

Spenser in fact calls Arthegall's first adventure an "inquest" - that is, a judicial inquiry designed to investigate a case and to find the truth. The rest of the canto answers Arthegall's first question to the hapless Squire:

who had that Dame so fouly dight;  
Or whether his own hand, or whether other wight?

(F.Q. 5.1.14).

It is iconographically appropriate that the investigation should concern a headless lady - that ancient hieroglyph of justice which was said to stand beside the Gates of Truth. This emblematic allusion both poses the problem - "How does one discover the truth?" - and suggests the means by which the problem can be solved - by judicial impartiality coupled with understanding. Arthegall's procedure in this case is meant to contrast with Talus's more violent methods of discovering truth, mentioned immediately before the episode begins:

His name was Talus, made of iron mould,  
Immoveable, resistlesse, without end.  
Who in his hand an iron flale did hould,  
With which he thresht out falshood, and did truth  
unfould.

(F.Q. 5.1.12).

The image of the headless body that confronts Arthegall is a comment on the world in which Arthegall has to prosecute his quest. Astraea,<sup>17</sup> who in the golden age dwelt with men upon earth, now

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17. Curio's description of Justice (cf. n. 15) is headed "Astraea".



is headless, a result of the savagery and brutality of men. The causes of this "foul misdeed" and the reasons why the lady is "fouly dight" are obscure, and the truth must be "unfould" by Arthegall's investigation.

Arthegall favours neither the knight nor the squire, but appears to sympathize with both. Arthegall's initial response to the sight of the lady's body is similar to the squire's. The squire "rews" the loss of his lady, as Arthegall is "moved at that ruefull sight".<sup>18</sup> But whereas the squire collapses into inaction under the weight of his grief, and later is prepared to subvert the course of justice by confessing his own feigned guilt in order that the case should be resolved as painlessly as possible,<sup>19</sup> Arthegall by contrast is moved by pity to an inner "zeal of vengeance", which makes him prosecute his case to a just conclusion. Arthegall, like the squire, wishes the cause to be decided painlessly, and so he avoids the barbarous solutions of trial by ordeal and by combat (which in any case would favour the knight unfairly). But, unlike the squire, he is not prepared to accept a false confession of guilt as an easy solution. His inquiry must not only produce a result, but the result must be just.

However, Arthegall's proposal for resolving the dispute bears at first sight an uncanny resemblance to Sir Sanglier's

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For Spenser's account of Astraea's departure from the earth, see F.Q. 5.1.11.

18. F.Q. 5.1.14, 5.1.16.

19. F.Q. 5.1.15, 5.1.24 and 5.1.27.

treatment of his lady. Just as the Knight offers at first to exchange ladies with the Squire, so Arthegall proposes a more grisly equal exchange, by dividing both dead and living ladies. When Sir Sanglier's initial offer is refused, he takes the Squire's lady by force and abandons his own. He adopts a similarly hasty pragmatic course when his lady objects. When she begs the Knight not to cast her off but to kill her instead, Sir Sanglier quickly performs exactly what she asks and strikes off her head. Arthegall proposes a similarly hasty pragmatic solution of the dispute by offering to perform a similar act of mutilation upon the surviving lady. It appears that Arthegall would be prepared to adopt the callous severity of a ruthless distributive justice, akin to that practised by Sir Sanglier. This kind of justice is apparently impartial or "headless", but it takes no account of the justice of either party's claim, and so it fails in an essential function of distributive justice - to give to the deserving what is right.<sup>20</sup> The other significant failure in this apparently impartial solution is that it completely excludes any reference to human feeling. We should not be surprised that the callous severity of this compromise solution should appeal instantly to Sir Sanglier.

The squire's dissent upsets this judicial process. In fact Arthegall relies upon the squire's reluctance to take part

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20. Distributive justice according to the traditional iconography of Justice holding the scales, should not strive for equal treatment of the parties in the case, but should aim to award rewards and punishment according to the deserts of both parties: "Sedenim apud veteres aliter traditum inveni, qui iustitiam cum libratis omnino lancibus in laeva figurabant, sed in dextera . . . fasces cum adalligata securi statuabant, merita aequaeque ex huiusmodi hieroglyphico praemia merentibus impendi, atque distribui, hinc scelerum convictis castigationem impendere significantes" Valeriano, lib. 42, p.453. For translation, see p. 133A.

p. 133 n.20:

Translation from Valeriano:

But I have discovered another tradition in the writings of the ancients, who depict justice with equally balanced scales in her left hand, but in her right hand they image the fasces with an axe attached to it, signifying by this hieroglyph, I have given just rewards to the deserving, and distributed punishment to those convicted of crimes.



in any judicial process to counteract Sir Sanglier's impulsive acceptance of any convenient means to provide a quick solution. But whereas the squire's earlier reluctance to take part in the inquiry proceeded from a pessimism about the possibility of ever reaching a just decision and from a desire to reach this unjust decision with as little effort as possible, his present confession of guilt, while still prepared to accept an unjust verdict, shows that he is prepared to recognize that there are degrees of injustice. It is better to keep the lady alive, even though she may be in the wrong hands, than to kill her in the interests of a convenient and easy solution. By paying attention to emotions, to his own love for the lady, the squire changes the basis upon which the judicial decision is made from a legalistic and formulaic approach to one that takes account of human emotions. He changes the emphasis from legalism to love.

But while we may respect the impulses behind the Squire's decision in resigning his lady to the knight, nevertheless it still leads to injustice. The lady is still in the wrong hands. Arthegall endorses the squire's position, but is concerned that a just decision should be reached. His distribution of the property is designed to give to the deserving what is right:

thine I deeme

The living Lady, which from thee he reaved:  
 For worthy thou of her doest rightly seeme.  
 And you, Sir Knight, that love so light esteeme,  
 As that ye would for little leave the same,  
 Take here your owne, that doth you best beseeme,  
 And with it beare the burden of defame;  
 Your owne dead Ladies head, to tell abroad your shame.

(F.Q. 5.1.27).

Sir Sanglier is assigned the grisly token of the dead lady's head, an explicit condemnation of his excessive rigour,<sup>21</sup> while the Squire is assigned the whole lady, possibly to signify that the judicial decision reached through love takes account of the whole person. Out of the two extremes represented by the squire and the knight, Arthegall constructs an equitable decision. The solution is not founded upon a callous legalism, but upon love. It was for this reason that Renaissance mythographers related the wings of Nemesis to the wings of Cupid, (see illustration 29).<sup>22</sup>

## II. The Lady without Hands: The Mutilation of Munera

Arthegall's treatment of Munera has been blamed for its excessive callousness and severity.<sup>23</sup> But his action only

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21. Scarlattini relates the woman's head to an image explicitly designed to terrify those who disregard the law: "Terrore: un Capo di Donna così deforme, e sparruto, che lo spavento ad esprimere, e far intendere il suo sembiante non havrebbe potuto scegliere figura più mostruosa di questa. Pausanio Intelligente . . . promulgo una Legge, che dovesse cio esser inteso questo per la figura, Image del Terrore . . . Questo dovrebbe havere avanti a gli occhi quelli, che malamente oprando si gettano dietro alle spalle la divina Giustitia . . ."
- O. Scarlattini, L'Huomo e sue Parte (Bologna 1684), p. 28. For translation, see p. 135A.
- u 22. Pausanias reports that the people of Smyrna were the first to depict Nemesis with wings to resemble Cupid. See Cartari, Imagini dei Dei, p. 241, referring to Pausanias, Description of Greece 1.33.7: "Neither this nor any other statue of Nemesis has wings, for not even the holiest wooden images of the Smyrnaeans have them, but later artists, convinced that the goddess manifests herself as a consequence of love, give wings to Nemesis as they do to Love."
23. See, for example, Aptekar, p. 231 n.9.

p. 135 n.21:

Translation from Scarlattini:

Terror: I could not have chosen a figure more monstrous than this:

a woman's head so deformed and ugly, that its image is too horrible to express or to render comprehensible. Pausanias published a law, that this figure should be known as the Image of Terror. Wrongdoers, and those who reject Divine Justice, should have this image in front of their eyes.



appears cruel if we regard Munera as a real person and lose sight of the emblematic character of the abstraction which she is. Munera, as her name suggests, represents Justice corrupted by bribery. She is described as a beautiful woman with hands of gold and feet of silver. When Talus, Arthegall's page, catches her, he ruthlessly lops off these hands and feet.

he her suppliant hands, those hands of gold,  
And eke her feete, those feete of silver trye,  
Which sought unrighteousnesse, and justice sold,  
Chopt off, and nayld on high, that all might them behold.

(F.Q. 5.2.26).

These hands of gold, which "justice sold," and the feet of silver, which "sought unrighteousness", are apt identifying attributes for a figure meant to represent bribery. Nevertheless, the punishment that Talus inflicts upon the hapless Munera would seem to be unnecessarily severe and repellent in its ruthlessness. Repellent, that is, until we realize the iconological wit involved in this punishment. Talus is in fact reforming Munera into a traditional image of Justice, and by so doing emphasizes the abuses that Munera represents.

1

In Alciati's emblem 144, IN SENATUM BONI PRINCIPIIS,<sup>24</sup> the just judges are all depicted without hands. (see illustration 30). Since they have no hands, they are unable to take bribes, and

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24. Derived from Plutarch's description in De Iside et Osiride of the Theban statues of judges without hands, . . ." to indicate that justice is not influenced by gifts or by

in that way the integrity of justice is preserved:

Cur sine sunt manibus? capiant ne munera, nec se  
Pollicitis flecti muneribusve sinant.<sup>25</sup>

Faxardo bases his emblem, CUSTODIUNT NON CARPIUNT, on the same idea. It depicts four statues without arms at the corners of a garden:

The Thebans represented the Integrity of Ministers, especially those of Justice, by a Statue without hands: for when they are shut they are the Emblem of Avarice, when open its Instruments. This Garden represents the same thing, by these Statues without arms, which are at the corners of each Walk, like those in the Walks at Rome; nor are there any better Guards than these; for they have eyes to watch the Flowers, but want Arms to gather them; if all Ministers were like these Statues, the Exchequer would be more secure, and Nations better governed.<sup>26</sup>

When he lops off Munera's hands, Talus in fact converts Munera into the traditional image of Justice, and symbolically corrects the abuse to which she was given. When he displays the amputated hands he makes us conscious of the abuse which these hands signified.

When he cuts off Munera's feet, Talus completes her transformation into the image of Justice. While the judges in Alciati's emblem are not depicted without feet, they are depicted sitting down. Minois, in his commentary on Alciati's emblem,

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intercession" (Moralia, 355). See also Cartari, The Fountain of Ancient Fiction (1599) sigs. k3v-k4, N. Caussin, Polyhistor Symbolicus (Paris 1618), and Valeriano, p. 363.

25. Alciati, Emblemata, Emblem 144, 11.7-8: "Why are they without hands? they neither desire gifts, nor do they allow themselves to be moved by promises or bribes."

26. Diego Saavedra Faxardo, The Royal Politician, translated by J.A. Astry (London 1700), Emblem 53, Vol. 2, pp. 18-19.

notes the importance of stability in making decisions, and this stability is indicated by the judges' sitting posture.<sup>27</sup>

Valeriano mentions feet as a hieroglyph of VACILLATIO.<sup>28</sup> For Munera's "silver feet" this is highly significant, suggesting as it does that her decisions vacillated according to the money, the silver, she was given. With no feet, she is unable to vacillate according to the bribes she is given. Spenser may indeed be guilty here of a certain amount of grim gallows humour: having no feet, Munera is forced to sit down. Without hands and feet Munera is converted into a true image of Justice.

At the basis of this episode, then, lies the traditional image of Justice without hands. Spenser added the golden hands to this traditional image of Justice to form his Lady Munera, the golden hands symbolizing the abuse of which she was guilty, and reminding us that this attribute is a departure from the right image of Justice. The silver feet are added as an analogue of the golden hands, reinforcing the message implied in the manual addition. Justice, in the shape of the iron groom Talus, prunes these excrescences,<sup>29</sup> and so restores the image of Justice to its traditional proper state.

## 11

The allusion to the traditional image of handless Justice in Canto Two spells out the common theme treated in the

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27. Minois' note in Alciati, Emblemata, pp. 515f.

28. Valeriano, lib. 35, p. 365.

29. See the pruning metaphors in F.Q. 5.1.1.



three events in the canto: the correction of economic abuses of Justice. The story of Pollente and the Toll Bridge is an obvious allegory of illegal extortion. But the Giant with the Scales also represents a kind of Justice which has been distorted by economic self-interest. The obvious political appeal of the Giant to modern critical commentators has perhaps concealed the allusion to a moral emblem of Justice that lies buried within the narrative.<sup>30</sup>

The Giant who attempts to balance his scales with unequal weights recalls Guillaume de la Perriere's emblem of Roman justice corrupted by financial interest:

The Proverbs saith a man must never passe  
Nor peize his ballance with unequall weights,  
As once in Rome a happie custome was,  
Where equitie maintained without sleights,  
And Justice was the Monarks looking glasse,  
Till Avarice possessed their conceits:  
Then civill discord set their hearts at warre,  
And caused each man his owne good to marre.<sup>31</sup>

The scales, normally an attribute of Justice,<sup>32</sup> become in the

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30. I do not wish to deny the presence of the political and cosmic dimensions of the story, but merely to provide an additional emblematic context.
31. Guillaume de la Perriere, Emblem 9, here translated by Thomas Combe in The Theater of Fine Devices (1614). The same emblem appeared in C. Paradin and D. Simeoni, Symbola Heroica (Antwerp 1563), p. 172. The proverb appears in Diogenes Laertius, De clarorum philosophorum vitis VIII. 17.
32. See, for example, Tervarent, s.v. Balance I. Attribut de la Justice. Spenser significantly assigns the balance to Avarice in the procession of the seven deadly sin: F.Q. 1.4.27.

Giant's hands the instruments by which he and his followers hope to overthrow the economic order to their own advantage. Munera's distortion of justice is here writ large, as the hope of financial gain encourages the rabble to attempt to overthrow civil order.

Each of the events in Canto Two, then, deals with financial abuses of Justice in one form or another.

### III. The Sun and the Bridle:

#### The Spousalls of Florimell and Marinell.

Book Five Canto Three concerns the threat posed by emotional excesses to the administration of Justice. The two emotions specifically dealt with are pride and anger. The events of the canto revolve around two attributes of the goddess Nemesis: the sun and the bridle.

#### i

. . . Braggadochio . . . did shew his shield,  
Which bore the Sunne brode blazed in a golden field.  
(F.Q. 5.3.14).

The power of the Goddess Nemesis was traditionally associated with the Sun. In Alciati's Emblem 27, NEC VERBO, NEC FACTO QUENQUAM LAEDENDUM (our illustration 20), the sun can be seen shining over the Goddess's left shoulder. Cartari connects this planetary association with the goddess's opposition to pride: "for the Sun

is of this nature, that wherever it appears, it obscures the brilliance of all other lights, and often causes some to appear and to shine, which seemed dark before."<sup>33</sup> Nemesis oppresses the excessively proud and exalts the humble; she reveals the hidden truth, by blotting out the false and distracting splendour of the boastful.<sup>34</sup>

## ii

Braggadocchio has but narrowly avoided exposure as a knightly fraud for some time; but it is entirely fitting that he should get his come-uppance at this point in the Legend of Justice. Arthegall's true, brilliant worth reveals Braggadocchio's borrowed splendour for the counterfeit it is.<sup>35</sup> His false light is

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33. Cartari, p. 240: "Perciò che'l Sole è di questa natura, che dovunque appare, oscura lo splendore di ogni altro lume, e fa spesso apparire, e risplendere quello, che prima stava occulto, e pareva oscuro." The idea derives from Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1.22.1. See also Gyraldi, p. 393: "Macrobius vero, *Nemesin contra superbiam coli, esseque Solis potestatem arbitratus est. cuius haec natura sit, ut fulgentia obscuret et quae sunt in obscuro illuminet.*"

34. See Cartari, p. 240: "Nemesi . . . opprime i troppo superbi, e solleva gli humili, e a ben vivere gli aiuta, ed in somma era creduta questa Dea punire tutti quelli, li quali troppo si insuperbivano del bene, che havevano." Gyraldi, p. 393 expresses the same idea: "Nemesis, nunc erectas mentium humanarum cervices opprimere, et enervare videtur: nunc bonos ab imo suscitans, ad bene vivendum extollit." Minois in his note on Alciati's Emblem 27 traces the idea back to Seneca: "Dominare tumidus, spiritus altos gere; / Sequitur superbos ultor a tergo Deus" (pp. 129f). For Nemesis's opposition to pride, see Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, ATTICA, xxxiii. 2-3. Erasmus, *Adagia*, s.v. *Adrastia*. Nemesis claims that the ancients regarded Nemesis as the punisher of insolence and arrogance, whose duty was to punish immoderate desires (ed. Geneva 1606, col. 1855). For translations of Cartari and Gyraldi, see p. 141A.

35. Cf. F.Q. 5.3.39.



p. 141 n. 34:

Translation of Cartari:

Nemesis oppresses those who are over-proud, and uplifts the humble, and helps them to live well, and in addition this goddess was believed to punish all those, who pride themselves too much on the goods, they possess.

Translation of Gyraldi:

Nemesis is believed to oppress the haughty boldness of human minds and to weaken it; she encourages men to live well, and uplifts the good.

thoroughly eclipsed by the just knights's true achievement:  
His armes with their sunny device are "blotted out" (F.Q. 5.3.37).

Similarly, the counterfeit Florimell vanishes when  
juxtaposed with the true worth of the lady herself:

Th'enchanted Damzell vanisht into nought:  
Her snowy substance melted as with heat.

(F.Q. 5.3.24).

In just such a way, the emblematiser Aneau assures us, counterfeit  
shadows vanish before the noon-day sun of true virtue:

. . . Quand aucun homme illustre,  
De Sapience, et vertus ayant lustre,  
Vient resplendir en tresclaire action,  
Au plus hault point de sa perfection:  
Ceux qui sembloient quelquechose estre: hayssent  
Si grand lumiera, et l'ors evanouissent.  
Et tout soubdain sont neant devenuz. <sup>36</sup>

iii

And th'one hand seizing on his golden bit,  
With th'other drew his sword. . .

(F.Q. 5.3.29).

The "biting bitte" is a traditional attribute of Nemesis. With  
this she restrains the wicked when they intend harm. <sup>37</sup> The  
sword is, of course, a traditional attribute of Justice. <sup>38</sup>

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36. Aneau, *Imagination poetique*, p. 54: SOUVERAINE VERTU EFFACE LA FAULSE APPARENCE DE VERTU. For translation, see p. 142A.

37. "A raine shee houldes . . . / With biting bitte, where with the lewde shee staies: / And pulles them backe, when harme they doe intende" (Whitney, p. 19). See also Alciati, Emblem 27; Tervarent, s.v. Mors avec les rênes. II. Attribut de Nemesis.

38. See Tervarent, s.v. Epee. I. Attribut de la Justice.

p. 142:

Translation of Aneau:

Whenever any famous man, illustrious in wisdom and virtue, comes and performs some brilliant act to the highest point of perfection: those, who seemed to be something, hate such great light, and then vanish. Suddenly they become nothing.



The conjunction of these attributes is meant to indicate the necessity of moderation in the administration of justice.<sup>39</sup>

Abuses ought not to be corrected wrathfully, but with restraint.<sup>40</sup>

Guyon is not at the wedding feast by accident, but to teach Arthegall a lesson.

#### IV. CONCLUSION.

Surprisingly, little attention has been given to these traditional emblems of Justice in Book Five. Even Jane Aptekar's book which is meant to be concerned specifically with this subject is strangely silent on these emblems. Nevertheless, recognition of Spenser's accommodation of emblematic representations of the titular virtue into the narrative of these early cantos can alter our view of the poem. Dunseath, for example, regards these early cantos as a portrayal of the hero's personal failings: a false start before he can successfully complete his quest.<sup>41</sup> But these cantos do show Arthegall's mastery of important judicial principles: they firmly establish Arthegall's legal credentials. What Dunseath is probably responding to is not a false beginning,

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39. The bridle is also the attribute of Temperance, see Crouch's emblem 11, *SERVA MODUM* (our illustration 31), from *Delights for the Ingenious* (1681), p. 42. According to Cartari, p. 240, Nemesis's bridle shows that men ought to restrict their tongues and to do all things with moderation ("debbono gli huomini porte freno alla lingua, e fare tutto con misura").

40. See Arthegall's wrath, and Guyon's sound advice for moderation in *F.Q.* 5.3.36.

41. Dunseath, pp. 86f.

but to a different narrative mode: one where traditional symbols are close to the surface of the poem. The beginning of the book may be more emblematically schematic, but certainly not false.

The Legend of Justice has been perhaps the least loved of all the books of The Faerie Queene, principally because "the political allegory of the fifth book is more transparent than that of any other in the Faerie Queene."<sup>42</sup> Yet Spenser's resolutions of events according to traditional images of Justice may be seen as a justification of Elizabethan policy in terms of the enduring judicial attitudes. The particular allegory accommodates the emblematic archetypes of justice in a thoroughly exemplary fashion.

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42. Spenser Variorum, 5. 315.

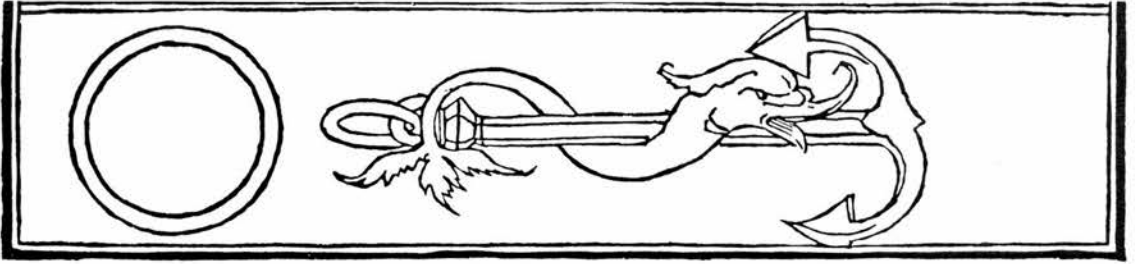
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3. "Virtus," from Philippe Galle, Prosopographia (Antwerp 159?)
4. Botticelli, Pallas and the Centaur.
5. "Potentissimus Affectus Amor," from Alciati, Emblemata (Leyden 1608), p. 111.
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31. "Serva modum" from N. Crouch, Delights for the Ingenious (1681), p. 42.



1. "Semper festina tarde," from Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, p. 61.



2. "Non tibi, sed Religioni," from Whitney, A Choice of Emblemes (Leyden 1586), p. 8.





*Eisem, hastam, et galeam mihi tradidit arma vetustas:  
 2. Nunc conculco malum cum Vitis Satyrum.*

3. "Virtus," from Philippe Galle, Prosopographia (Antwerp 159?).



4. Botticelli, Pallas and the Centaur.

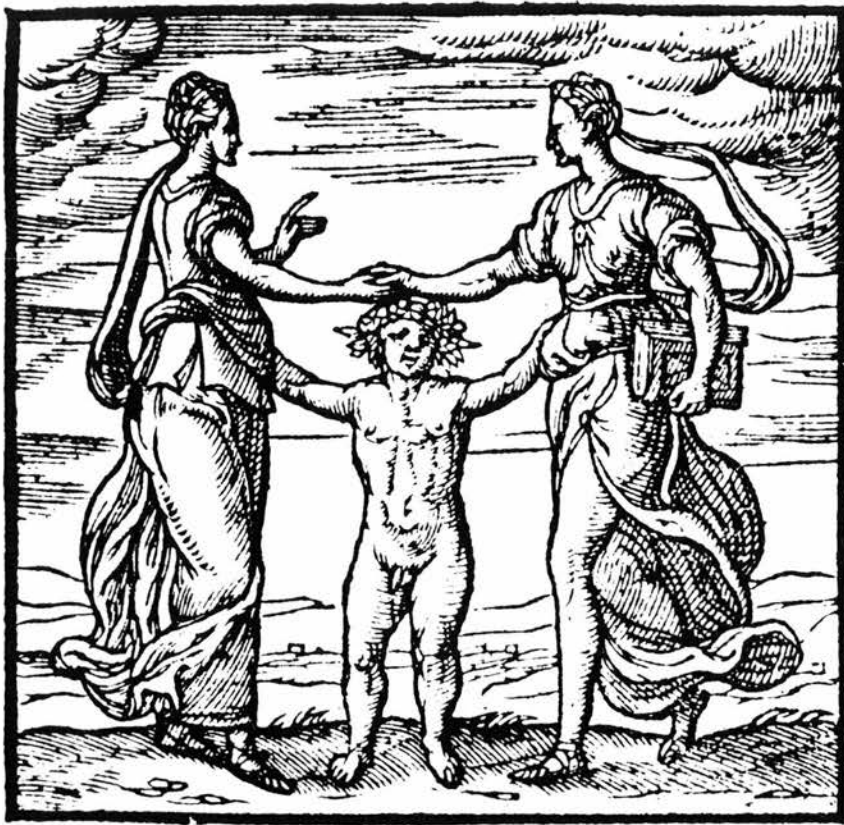


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6. "Sol non occidat super iracundiam vestram," from Whitney, p. 216





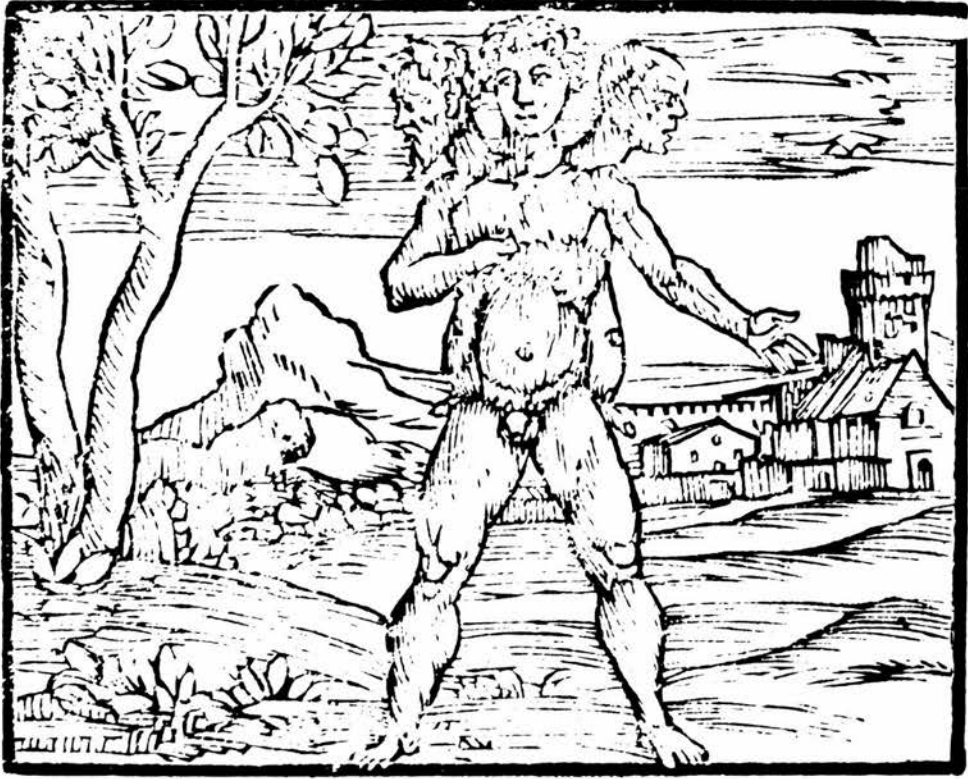
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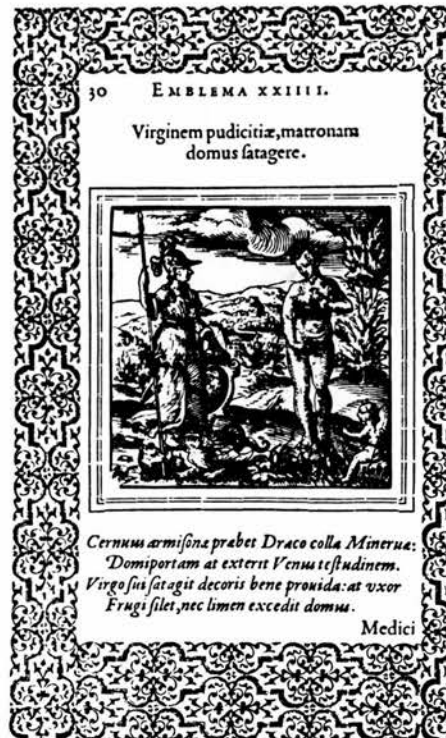


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15. "Matrimonio" from Ripa, (Padua 1618), p. 321.



16. "Figure de mariage," from Aneau, Imagination poetique (Lyons 1552), p. 19.



17. "Amor aeternus," from Vaenius, Emblemata Amorum (Antwerp 1608) P.1.





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19. "Culpam poena premit comes," from Vaenius, *Q. Horat. Flacci Emblemata* (Antwerp 1607), p. 181.



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21. "L'ymage d'occasion," from G. Gorrozet, Hecatomgraphie (Paris 1543), sig. M2v.



22. "Fidii Simulacrum" from (Frankfurt 1614), p. 740.



23. "Fraude," from Ripa, (Padua 1618), p. 209





24. "Janus," from Guillaume de la Perriere, Le Theatre des Bons Engins (Paris 1539), Emblem 1.



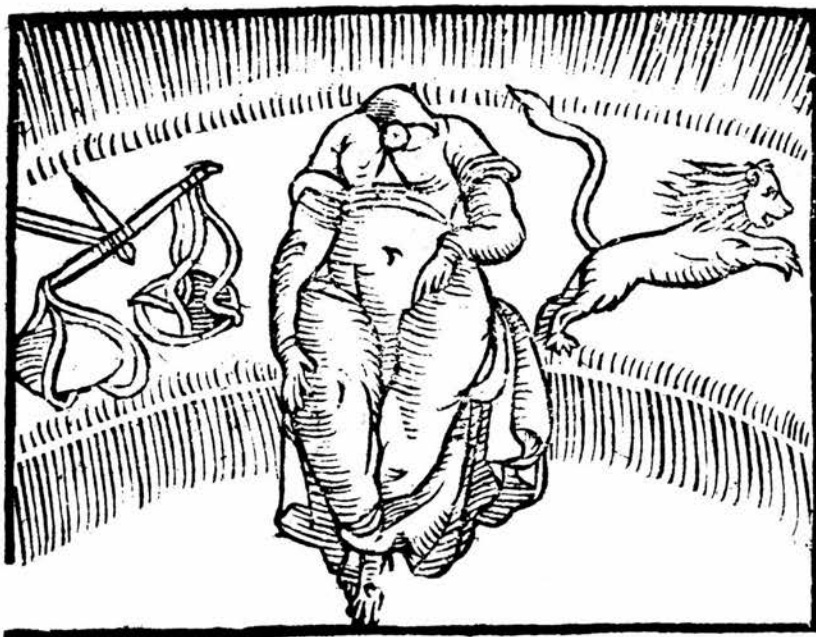
25. "Pando Recondita," from Wither, Emblems (1635), p. 138



26. "Quid tunc," from Mannich, Sacra Emblemata (Nuremburg 1625), p. 25.



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28. "Astraea," from Valeriano (Frankfurt 1614), p. 748.



29. Nemesis, from Alciati (Augsburg 1531), sig. A7.





30. "In senatum boni," from Alciati, (Augsburg 1531), sig. D9v.

*Choice Emblems,*  
**Emblem XI.**



*Serva Modum.*

31. "Serva modum," from Crouch, Delights for the Ingenious (1681), p. 42.

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